



# **Freedom of Information Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) gives individuals the right to access information held by public bodies. Winterbourne Parish Council (the Council) recognises its obligations under the Act and is committed to openness, transparency and accountability in the conduct of its business.

This policy sets out how the Council will comply with the Act, how information will be made available, and how requests for information will be handled.

Further information about the Act is available from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

## **2. Commitment to Openness**

The Council aims to conduct its business in an open and honest manner. When decisions are made, the Council seeks to ensure that the public is able to understand how and why those decisions have been reached.

Information will be made publicly available unless there is:

- a clear legal reason for withholding it (including exemptions under the Act);
- a requirement to protect personal data under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018; or
- an overriding public interest in withholding the information.

## **3. Confidentiality and Exemptions**

The Council will not classify documents as confidential without clear and justifiable reasons for doing so.

The Act contains a number of exemptions that may permit the Council to withhold information. Where an exemption applies, the Council will consider whether the public interest test applies and, if so, whether the public interest favours disclosure.

The existence of an exemption does not automatically prevent disclosure; each case will be considered on its merits.

## **4. Equality and Accessibility**



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The Council is committed to ensuring that access to information is not dependent on a person's physical, social, educational or linguistic circumstances.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate, including providing information in alternative formats where practicable.

## 5. Charges

The Council may charge fees as permitted under the Freedom of Information Act, the Data Protection Act and associated Regulations, to cover the cost of locating, retrieving and providing information.

Where a request exceeds the appropriate cost limit set by Regulations, the Council will:

- provide advice and assistance to help the applicant refine their request; or
- agree provision of the information where the applicant is willing to meet the full cost.

The Council will not seek to make a profit from handling information requests.

## 6. Records Management

The Council recognises that effective records management is essential to compliance with the Act. It will maintain appropriate standards for:

- filing and indexing;
- retention and disposal;
- security of information;
- tracking and retrieval of records.

These standards form part of the Council's wider data protection and information governance arrangements.

## 7. Making a Request for Information

Requests for information must be made in writing (including email) and should include:

- the applicant's name;
- a contact address (postal or email);
- a clear description of the information requested;
- confirmation that the request is made under the Freedom of Information Act, where applicable.

Applicants may specify their preferred format for receiving the information and their preferred method of communication.



The Council is legally required to respond to requests within 20 working days of receipt. Applicants will be kept informed of progress and advised of any delays where applicable.

## 8. Publication Scheme

The Council has adopted the Information Commissioner's Model Publication Scheme. This commits the Council to proactively publish information as part of its normal business activities.

The scheme:

- specifies the classes of information the Council publishes;
- explains how the information can be accessed;
- identifies any charges that may apply;
- is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Where information listed in the scheme is not held, this will be clearly indicated.

## 9. Datasets and Re-use

Where the Council holds datasets that are requested under the Act, it will publish them unless it is not appropriate to do so. Where reasonably practicable, datasets will be published in a re-usable electronic format.

Where the Council owns the copyright in a dataset, it will make the information available for re-use in accordance with the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015.

## 10. Review and Maintenance

This policy will be reviewed regularly and at least every three years, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or guidance.

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
<b>Class 1 – Who we are and what we do</b>  Current information only	Website: <a href="https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk">https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk</a>	Free



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<p>List of Council members and their responsibilities as well a list of Council Committees.</p> <p>Details of any representation on local public bodies</p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/your-councillors">https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/your-councillors</a></p>	Free
<p>Postal and email address</p> <p>Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members</p> <p>Where possible, provide named contacts including contact phone numbers and email addresses</p>	<p>Winterbourne Parish Council</p> <p>The Greenfield Centre</p> <p>Park Avenue</p> <p>Winterbourne</p> <p>BS36 1NJ</p> <p>Sarah Lucy</p> <p>Clerk/RFO</p> <p><a href="mailto:clerk@winterbournepc.co.uk">clerk@winterbournepc.co.uk</a></p> <p>01454 776922</p>	Free
<p>Location of main Council offices and accessibility details</p>	<p>Winterbourne Parish Council</p> <p>The Greenfield Centre</p> <p>Park Avenue</p> <p>Winterbourne</p> <p>BS36 1JN</p> <p>No upper levels (ground floor disabled access)</p>	Free
<p>Staffing Structure</p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/how-we-work">https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/how-we-work</a></p>	Free
<p><b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b></p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/receipts-and-payments2">https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/receipts-and-payments2</a></p>	Free



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(Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)  Current and financial year as a minimum	<a href="https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns">https://winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns</a>	
Statement of accounts and internal audit report in the format included in the Annual Return	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns</a>	Free
Finalised budget	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/budget">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/budget</a>	Free
Precept	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/budget">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/budget</a>	Free
Borrowing Approval Letter		Free
All items of expenditure above £100	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/receipts-and-payments2">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/receipts-and-payments2</a>	Free
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/images/pdfs-menu/WPC%20Standing%20Orders%20May%202025%20copy.pdf">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/images/pdfs-menu/WPC%20Standing%20Orders%20May%202025%20copy.pdf</a>  <a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/images/pdfs-menu/Financial%20Regulations%202025.pdf">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/images/pdfs-menu/Financial%20Regulations%202025.pdf</a>	Free
Grants given and received	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/grants/grants-issued-2025-2026">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/grants/grants-issued-2025-2026</a>	Free



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List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/pc-contracts-above-5000-00">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/pc-contracts-above-5000-00</a>	Free
Members' allowances and expenses	N/A	
<p><b>Class 3 – what our priorities are and how we are doing</b></p> <p>(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)</p> <p>Current and previous as a minimum</p>	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>	Free
Annual governance statement in format included in the Annual Return	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/finance/annual-returns</a>	Free
Parish Plan	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>	Free
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/agendas-minutes/annual-general-meetings">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/agendas-minutes/annual-general-meetings</a>	Free
Quality Status		
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DLUHC's guidelines		
Data Protection impact assessments (in full or summary format) or any other impact assessment (eg Health and Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact assessments etc.), as appropriate and relevant	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/policy-procedures/data-protection-policy">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/policy-procedures/data-protection-policy</a>  <a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/media/attachments/2025/04/16/equality-and-diversity-policy-2025.pdf">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/media/attachments/2025/04/16/equality-and-diversity-policy-2025.pdf</a>  <a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/policy-procedures/wdvds-3">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/policy-procedures/wdvds-3</a>	Free



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Class 4 – How we make decisions  (Decision making processes and records of decisions)  Current and previous council year as a minimum	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  (Agendas and minutes)	Free
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/meetings/all-upcoming">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/meetings/all-upcoming</a>	Free
Agendas of meetings (as above)	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  (Agendas and minutes)	Free
Minutes of meetings (as above) – exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure		
Reports presented to council meetings – exclude material that is properly exempt from disclosure	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  (Agendas and minutes)	Free
Responses to public consultation papers		Free
Responses to planning applications	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  (Agendas and minutes)	Free
Bye-laws		
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b>  (current written protocols and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)  Current information only	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  (your council, policies and procedures)	Free



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<p>Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedural standing orders</li> <li>• Committee and sub-committee terms of reference</li> <li>• Delegated authority in respect of officers</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Policy statements</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a> (your council, policies and procedures)</p>	<p>Free</p>
<p>Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal instructions to staff policies relating to the delivery of services</li> <li>• Equality and diversity policy</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Recruitment policies and details of current vacancies</li> <li>• Policies and procedures for handling requests for information</li> <li>• Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a> (your council, policies and procedures)</p>	<p>Free</p>
<p>Records management, personal data and access to information policies Include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies</p>	<p><a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a> (your council, policies and procedures)</p>	<p>Free</p>
<p><b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b></p> <p>Currently maintained lists and registers only.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a></p>	<p>Free</p>
<p>Information legally required to hold in publicly available registers (in</p>	<p>Available on request – Financial documents held for 7 years</p>	



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most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)		
Assets register, including details of public land and building assets	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/how-we-work">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/your-council/about/how-we-work</a>	Free
Disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests. These are recommended as good practice	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a> (your council, policies and procedures)	Free
Register of members' interests	<a href="https://council.southglos.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&amp;cat=15009">https://council.southglos.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&amp;cat=15009</a>	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	N/A	
<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b>  (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>  Some information may only be available by inspection	
Allotments	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sports-leisure/allotments">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sports-leisure/allotments</a>	Free
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	N/A	
Community centres and village halls	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/room-hire">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/room-hire</a>	Free



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Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sp-orts-leisure/leisure">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sp-orts-leisure/leisure</a>	Free
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	<a href="https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sp-orts-leisure/leisure">https://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.org.uk/sp-orts-leisure/leisure</a>	Free
Bus shelters		
Markets	N/A	
Public conveniences	N/A	
Agency agreements	Youth Provision	
Services for which we are entitled to recover a fee and details of those fees (eg burial fees)	Allotment Land Rental	
Additional Information Information not itemised in the lists above		

<b>Title</b>	Freedom Of Information Policy
<b>Author</b>	Sarah Lucy
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