



PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

ADOPTED at the Ordinary Meeting on 28th May 2026

Introduction

Prudhoe Town Council is committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and accessibility in its operations. This policy outlines the Town Council's approach to handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and ensures compliance with its statutory obligations.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives to the public a general right to see information held by public bodies, such as local councils, subject to certain exclusions.

The Act is in addition to the existing statutes relating to specific service areas where local authorities already hold and provide a wide range of information which is available to the public. The Act must be considered in conjunction with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Scope

This policy applies to all recorded information held by the Council, regardless of format (including paper, electronic documents, emails, photographs, CCTV, and audio recordings).

Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is the Council's designated Freedom of Information Officer and is responsible for:

- Maintaining the Publication Scheme
- Managing and responding to requests
- Ensuring compliance with statutory deadlines

Employees must ensure that information is managed in accordance with Council policy and that any FOI requests received are passed promptly to the Town Clerk.

Publication Scheme

Prudhoe Town Council adopts the model Publication Scheme provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This scheme identifies the classes of information routinely made available by the council.

The publication scheme is available on the Town Council's website - www.prudhoetowncouncil.gov.uk or upon request from the council office. The council contact details can be found at the end of this policy.

Making a Freedom of Information Request

Any person may make a written request for information. Requests must:

- Be made in writing (letter or email)
- Include the requester's name and correspondence address (email or postal)
- Describe clearly the information sought

Requests should be sent to:

The Town Clerk
Prudhoe Town Council
The Spetchells Centre
58 Front Street
Prudhoe
Northumberland
NE42 5AA

Or via email to: info@prudhoetowncouncil.gov.uk

Responding to Requests

The Town Council will log and acknowledge requests, and will respond within 20 working days of receiving a valid request.

If additional clarification is required, the response period will commence once the clarification is received.

Whilst the Council is committed to providing advice and assistance to all applicants who request information, the Council will not do so when it judges that a particular applicant is vexatious within the terms of the Act.

Charges

The council reserves the right to charge for the cost of photocopying, printing, and postage where applicable.

Fees will not exceed the limits set out in the FOIA and associated regulations and requesters will be notified of any fees in writing before the request is processed.

The 20 days for responding to requests is put on hold until the fee is paid. If the fee is not paid within three months, it is assumed the applicant no longer wants the information.

Exemptions

Certain information may be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. These are detailed in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Exemptions (Part II). Examples include:

- Personal data

- Information subject to legal privilege
- Confidentiality

If an exemption applies, the council will provide the requester with an explanation for the refusal.

Review and Appeals

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the Council's response, they may request an internal review by writing to the Town Clerk.

If still dissatisfied, the applicant may contact:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Wycliffe House, Water Lane

Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

Further information

If you would like further advice and assistance in making a request, please contact the office. We are happy to help applicants understand their rights under the Act and identify the information they want.

Prudhoe Town Council

The Spetchells Centre

58 Front Street

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