



NORTH WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

North Waltham Parish Council (NWPC) 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 interest where relevant.

The Freedom of Information Act (2000)

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

The Revised Model Publication Scheme

North Waltham Parish Council has adopted the revised Model Publication Scheme issued by the Information Commissioner's Office, which indicates the information that will be provided as part of the normal business activities of the Council and how it will be provided. You can access a copy of the Publication Scheme here.

<https://www.northwaltham.net/media/4914/document-publication-scheme-v3-dec-2018-final.pdf>

Website

A significant amount of information about North Waltham Parish Council can be accessed on the North Waltham website at the following link.

<https://www.northwaltham.net/parish-council/>

Requesting Information

Individuals or organisations may make a written request for information which they believe North Waltham Parish Council holds. To request information under the provisions of the Act, and to help the Parish Council in identifying the precise information you require, please contact the Clerk (contact details below).

As required under the Act, the following will need to be included with the request:

- Name of person requesting the information.

- Postal address of the person requesting the information.
- A clear description of the information being requested.
- A preference of how the information is to be communicated, eg. hard copy, electronic or the opportunity to inspect a record containing the information.

North Waltham Parish Council will try to provide the information in the preferred media as far as is reasonably practical or will notify the person requesting the information if the Parish Council cannot do so.

Responding to Requests

North Waltham Parish Council will inform the person requesting the information in writing if the Parish Council holds the information requested and if so, will provide the information no later than 20 working days after receipt of the request.

Information Exempt from the Act

The FOI Act identifies a number of categories of information which North Waltham Parish Council is not required to disclose under the Act. In this case, the Parish Council will write to the person requesting the information, stating the exemption which provides the basis for refusal within the Act and why it applies to the information requested. The Parish Council will communicate this within 20 working days.

Charges

There is no 'flat rate' fee to receive information requested under the FOI Act and in many cases, North Waltham Parish Council will provide the information free of charge. However, if the information requested is not readily available in the media it is requested, the Parish Council may charge a fee based on the costs associated with providing the information, eg. photocopying and postage (known as 'disbursements').

Refusal of Requests

The FOI Act does permit North Waltham Parish Council to refuse a request if the Parish Council estimate that it will cost the Parish Council in excess of the appropriate cost limit (currently £450) to fulfil the request.

Freedom of Information Fees Notice

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

Complaints

If persons requesting information are dissatisfied with the way North Waltham Parish Council has responded to a request for information, please contact the Clerk.

The Clerk to North Waltham Parish Council can be contacted as follows:

Email: clerk@northwaltham.info

Address: The Parish Clerk, 6 Longfield Close, North Waltham, Basingstoke, Hampshire
RG25 2EL

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 or by contacting the ICO.

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

Helpline Tel: 0303 123 1113

Information Commission's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Approved at Parish Council meeting, minute reference ...202/FC/10/18-19.....

Signed ...*GChapman (Chairman)*..... Date ...15th January 2019.....