



ACASTER MALBIS PARISH COUNCIL

SO/2016/02

PARISH COUNCIL WEB SITE AND WEBMASTER'S STANDING ORDERS.

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 sets out a new audit framework for local public authorities which are currently covered by the Audit Commission regime. Under the new audit framework smaller authorities including parish councils, internal drainage boards, charter trustees and port health authorities, with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 will be exempt from routine external audit. In place of routine audit, these smaller authorities will be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in the Transparency Code. This will enable local electors and ratepayers to access relevant information about the authority's accounts and governance.

The Transparency code is issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in exercise of his powers under section 2 of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 ("the 1980 Act"), as amended by section 38 of the Local Audit and Accountability ACT 2014, to issue a code of recommended practice as to the publication of information by local authorities about the which he considers to be related.

As far as the council's website is concerned compliance with the Transparency code shall not be subordinated and it is therefore the Webmaster's prime responsibility to ensure that all information published on the site is, to the best of his / her belief true, accurate and inclusive of the code's requirements. Notwithstanding the above the council's website shall not be used as a vehicle for advertising or promotion of any commercial ventures and it shall be the responsibility of the webmaster to prevent the publication of any covert solicitation.

In addition to the information which must be published [see below] it is the desire of the council to be totally transparent in all matters relating to the governance, finance, planning and content of meetings. It is the webmasters further responsibility to transfer all information provided to him / her for inclusion on the site within the time frames required by the code.

In addition to publishing information the web site shall provide archive facilities for the benefit of residents and electors of the parish; the archives shall hold all agendas and minutes of the council and all sub committees; the facility to download any document from the archive shall be without charge and, where possible, links to further relevant information shall be provided.

In order to have responsible control of all published information any documents to be uploaded or any requests for the inclusion, alteration or amendment of information on the site shall come from the clerk of the council to the webmaster.

The technical support offered by the site host and provider will be managed by the webmaster who will be the sole contact with the provider on matters relating to the CMS. All other matters shall be dealt with in the normal course by the clerk.

The list below, which is extracted from the code, lists the minimum information which should be published to remain compliant with the code however, and in addition, a timetable of all submission dates for documents to be uploaded shall be agreed with the clerk.

Information to be published.

Annual publication, no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates, of all items of expenditure above £100..

For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published:

- a) Date the expenditure was incurred.
- b) Summary of the purpose of the expenditure.
- c) Amount and Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered.

End of year accounts. Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed statement of accounts according to the format included in the Annual Return form accompanied by:

- a) Copy of the bank reconciliation for the relevant financial year,
- b) An explanation of any significant variances (e.g. more than 10-15 percent) in the statement of accounts for the relevant year and previous year and
- c) An explanation of any differences between 'balances carried forward' and 'total cash and short term investments', if applicable.

Annual governance statement. Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed annual governance statement according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative responses to governance statements, including how any weaknesses will be addressed.

Internal audit report

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed internal audit report according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative response to the internal control objectives, including how any weaknesses will be addressed. Explain any 'not covered' responses to internal control objectives.

A list of councillor or member responsibilities.

Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July
In the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates including:

- a) names of all councillors or members,
- b) committee or board membership and function (if Chairman or Vice Chairman), and
- c) Representation on external local public bodies (if nominated to represent the authority or board).

Location of public land and building assets.

Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July
In the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates.

Parish councils and port health authorities to publish details of all public land and building assets – either in its full asset and liabilities register or as an edited version.
The following information must be published:

- a) description (what it is, including size/acreage),
- b) location (address or description of location),
- c) owner / custodian, e.g. the authority manages the land or asset on behalf of a local charity,
- d) date of acquisition (if known),
- e) cost of acquisition (or proxy value) and
- f) Present use.

Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings.

Not later than one month after any meeting has taken place the clerk shall produce and the webmaster shall publish a set of draft minutes and subsequent formally approved minutes of that meeting.

Allowing a minimum of three clear days prior to any meeting the clerk shall produce and the webmaster shall publish a fully inclusive agenda of any proposed meeting along with a full set of reference papers as required. The three clear days shall be exclusive of the day of preparation of the notice, any Sunday and the intended day of the meeting.