



Acaster Malbis Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives the public a right of access to information held by public authorities. Acaster Malbis Parish Council (AMPC), as a public authority as defined by the Act, recognises its responsibility and is committed to promoting a culture of openness and transparency with all the information it holds to meet the requirements of the act.

Not all information held by AMPC can be released. AMPC may decide not to release information for a number of reasons, such as data protection, confidentiality or health and safety.

AMPC'S Freedom of Information Policy has been produced to ensure compliance with the provisions of the FOIA. The policy incorporates guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and uses the Transparency Code as its guidelines for the processing and provision of all information on a freely accessible website.

This policy applies to all members of staff and includes councillors, temporary or casual or agency staff, and contractors and suppliers working for, or on behalf of AMPC.

Requests for information which is not included on the website can be accessed on receipt of a specific written request. For a request to be considered valid under the FOIA, it must be in writing and include a name and address for correspondence (email address is sufficient). The information requested must be fully detailed.

Requests should be addressed via email to the clerk to the council at the address supplied. AMPC will respond to a request promptly.

However, some information may be exempt from disclosure under one of the exemptions in the Act or in the GDPR regulations.

AMPC reserves the right to charge applicants for supplying requested information but is under no obligation to provide information if the cost of doing so would be in excess of an 'appropriate limit'. Any fee for handling a request will be calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Fees Regulations.

Within the limits of the Transparency Code AMPC has designated the Clerk to be the sole contact for information relating to the council's business activities and the responsible person for the provision of information. Councillors do not have any responsibility for the processing of data or the disclosure of any data unless one of the statutory exemptions under GDPR applies.

Any requests for environmental information held by public authorities must be responded to in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), rather than the FOIA however, a written record will be made of any verbal requests that are received. Information will only be withheld in accordance with the exemptions specified by legislation, and the reasons for applying the exemption will be provided to the requester.

If the requestor of information is dissatisfied with the handling of their request or complaint, they have a right to appeal to the ICO at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone: 0303 123 1113 Website: www.ico.gov.uk.

AMPC will manage its records effectively and systematically to ensure information retrieval is simple, timely and meets legislative, regulatory, funding and ethical requirements.

This policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice and to ensure compliance with any changes or amendments to Data Protection legislation. This policy was last reviewed in October 2019 and approved by the full council at a meeting held on 11 November 2019.