

Casterton Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy (2015)

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives everyone a statutory right of access to information held by Casterton Parish Council

Requesting Information

Individuals or organisations may make a written request for other information which they believe the parish council holds. To make such a request under the provisions of the Act please email the clerk to the council: clerk@castertonparishcouncil.org.uk

You must include your name and address, together with a description of the information you are requesting. There is guidance on the ICO website (www.ico.org.uk) about making requests.

Responding to your Request

The Parish Council will inform you in writing whether it holds the information requested and if so, it will provide it to you no later than 20 working days following receipt of the request. In some circumstances, it may ask you for clarification.

The parish council will refer to the ICO document *The Guide to Freedom of Information* when processing your request and will seek further advice from the ICO if necessary.

The Act identifies a number of categories of information which the parish council is not required to disclose. In this case, the council will write to you stating the exemption which provides the basis for refusal and why it applies to the information requested. The parish council is obligated to safeguard the privacy of individuals (under the Data Protection Act) and this may also influence the council's response. Reasons for refusal will be communicated to you within the 20 working days' time period.

Charges for providing information

In many cases the parish council will provide the information free of charge, but may charge 10p/A4-page for photocopying documents. However if the information is not readily available in the form in which you are seeking it, the council may charge you a fee based on the cost of providing it. The Freedom of Information Act permits a parish council to refuse a request if the estimated cost is in excess of £450 (based on a staff cost of £25 per hour).

Freedom of Information Fees Notice

If the parish council writes to you to advise you of any charges it might make, this is known as the 'Fees Notice' and the 20 working days timeframe is halted, and will restart once payment is received. If no payment is received within three months, the parish council is not obliged to comply with your request.

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the way your request has been handled, please write to the Clerk to the Council. The ICO is responsible for enforcing the Act and you may raise issues with that office. www.ico.org.uk tel: 0303 123 1113

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe Lane, Water Lane, WILMSLOW SK9 5AF.

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