

EYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to obtain information held by public authorities unless there are good reasons to keep it confidential. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the UK's independent public body set up to promote access to official information and protect personal information. It has responsibility for ensuring that information is disclosed promptly and that exemptions from disclosure are applied lawfully. Some information could be exempt from disclosure.

Additional guidance on the Freedom of Information Act is available on the ICO website at www.ico.gov.uk or by telephone to their helpline 01625 545745.

1. MAKING A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1.1 How to make a request

- a) Make the information as specific as possible. If your request is too broad the Council may ask you to clarify it. This could mean it takes longer to get the information.
- b) Provide as full a description as possible of the information you require.
- c) Be clear about the format you would prefer to receive the information in, for example, by e-mail or as a paper copy

1.2 What happens when my request has been received?

- a) Any request for information should be treated by the Council as a formal request for information and the Council suggests that e-mails or letters are clearly marked as freedom of information requests to avoid any confusion.
- b) The Council must respond promptly to requests or, in any event, within 20 working days although the Council has longer to consider whether the disclosure of normally exempt information would be in the public interest. When considering the public interest test, the Council must do so 'within a reasonable time.'

1.3 What if the request is refused?

- a) Where the Council decides not to disclose the information requested it must give reasons for its decision, it must explain how the exemption or exception applies and it must explain the arguments under the public interest test. The Council must also inform you of your right to complain to the ICO.

1.4 How can the ICO help and what is the legal process?

- a) You may apply to the ICO for a decision about whether the request has been dealt with according to the Act, for example, you believe there has been excessive delay or if you wish to dispute the application of an exemption or refusals made on public interest grounds. The ICO may serve a decision notice on the Council either confirming the decision made by the Council or directing it to disclose information within a certain time. Non-compliance with a decision

notice may constitute contempt of court. If you or the Council disagrees with the ICO's decision you have 28 days to appeal to the independent Information Tribunal. The Information Tribunal may uphold the ICO's decision notice, amend it (for example change the time frame for release of information) or overturn it. Non-compliance with the Information Tribunal's notice may also constitute contempt of court.

2. MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

- a) Under the Freedom of Information it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication scheme.
- b) The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is changing the emphasis in the approval and operation of publication schemes to a generic model which should be adopted and operated by all public authorities.
- c) The model commits a public authority to 'produce and publish the method by which the specific information will be available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public'.
- d) This must be adopted in full, unedited and promoted alongside the guide to information. Local councils are not required to inform the Information Commissioner's Office that they have adopted the scheme; it will be assumed they have done so unless the ICO hears otherwise.
- e) The publication scheme provides a list of all the information the Council will make routinely available, explain how it can be accessed (either via the Parish Council website or hard copy) and whether or not a charge will be made for it.

2.1 Classes of Information

The information held by Eythorne Parish Council has been recorded under the following classes of information:

- Class 1 - Who we are and what we do
- Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it
- Class 3 - What our priorities are and how we are doing
- Class 4 - How we make decisions
- Class 5 - Our policies and procedures
- Class 6 - Lists and registers
- Class 7 - The services we offer

2.2 Charges for Information Published under this Scheme

- a) Information available through this Council's publication scheme should be readily available at minimum cost to the public. In most cases charges will be made on the basis of cost recovery.
- b) Charges may be made for actual disbursements (e.g. photocopying and postage) and information that the council is legally authorised to charge for.
 - i. Anyone requesting information will be notified of any charge before the information is provided.
 - ii. Payment will be requested before the information is supplied.
 - iii. A schedule of charges is appended to this document.

2.3 Freedom of information requests and the Publication Scheme

It is important to note that a publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not listed in the guide to information can still be requested and should be made available unless it can be legitimately withheld.

3. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM EYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

Class 1 - Who we are and what we do Note: This will be current information only		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Who's who on the Council	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free Free
Staffing structure	None	-

Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it Note: Current and previous financial year		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Finalised budget	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Precept	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	n/a	10p per sheet
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Grants given and received	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet

Class 3 - What our priorities are and how we are doing		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Eythorne Parish Plan 2007	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Playground Inspection	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Annual Report to Parish - current year		Free

Class 4 - How we make decisions Note: This will be current information only		
Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Timetable of meetings	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet

Agenda of meetings	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings - this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	Website within published meeting Minutes	Free
Responses to consultation papers	Website within published meeting Minutes	Free
Responses to planning applications	Website within published meeting Minutes	Free
Bye-laws	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet

Class 5 - Our policies and procedures
Note: This will be current information only

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing orders • Committee and sub-committee terms of reference - currently n/a (at Dec 2014) • Delegated authority in respect of officers -currently N/A (at Dec 2014) • Code of Conduct • Policy statements 	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: n/a	n/a	-
Internal policies relating to the delivery of services - n/a	n/a	-
Equal Opportunities policy	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Health and safety policy/risk assessments	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) - n/a	n/a	-
Policies and procedures for handling requests for information	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Information security policy	n/a	-
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Data protection policies	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet

Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
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Class 6 - Lists and Registers

Note: Currently maintained lists and registers only

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Any publicly available register or list	Contact DDC	Unknown
Assets Register	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Disclosure log	n/a	-
Register of members' interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to view from the Monitoring Officer, DDC Current Members declaration of interests forms 	Hard copy - contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	n/a	10p per sheet

Class 7 - The services we offer

Note: Current information only

Note: Some information listed below may be available by inspection only

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Allotments	n/a	-
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	n/a	-
Community centres and village halls	Contact Clerk	-
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Contact Clerk	-
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Contact Clerk	-
Bus shelters	Contact Clerk	-
Markets	n/a	-
Public conveniences	n/a	-
Agency agreements	n/a	-
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	n/a	-

Additional information

Note: This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised above

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Monthly Parish Magazine	Hard copy of latest edition - contact Clerk	Free

3.1 Contact details

Clerk Contact details: Suzanne Collins, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer,
c/o Elvington Community Centre, St John's Road, Elvington, Dover, Kent CT15
4DZ

Answerphone: 01304 832449

Email: clerk@eythornepc.kentparishes.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.eythornepc.kentparishes.gov.uk>

Schedule of charges		
Note: This describes how the charges have been arrived at and is published as part of the guide		
Type of charge	Description	Basis of charge
Cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation