

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

1. Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public authorities by providing people with rights of access to the information held by them.

The Council will comply with the requirements of the act, and in particular will:

- Make as much information as possible available via its Model Publication Scheme
- Respond to requests for information as quickly as possible, and in any event, within the statutory timescales
- Where we believe it is not going to be possible to respond fully within the statutory timescale (for example, where we have to consider the public interest tests), we will:
 - Advise you why, and give an estimated date by which the information will be provided, and
 - Provide as much of the information as possible within the earlier timescale
- Apply exemptions appropriately and consistently
- Ensure that any fees charged are calculated appropriately and consistently

The Act covers any recorded information that is held by the Council. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

2. What can be requested

The right to ask for information only relates to information held by the Council at the time the request is made.

A request under the Freedom of Information Act gives a right to 'information' rather than specific records or documents.

The Council publishes a wide range of information on its website and as per the Council's Publication Scheme. Before submitting a request for information, the Council would urge individuals to visit the Council's website or check the Council's Model Publication Scheme (available on the website) as the information required may already be published.

3. Refusal of a request

In certain circumstances the Council may refuse a request for information.

Vexatious and repeated requests and/or applications made with the aim of frustrating the operations of the Council may be refused.

The Council may also refuse to accede to a request for information where the information is considered to be exempted under the Freedom of Information Act.

Some parts of a request response may be redacted where the release would breach the Data Protection Act.



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All requests will be considered on their merits and with the aim that information should be made available unless it is clearly not in public interest to do so.

A written explanation for any refusal of a request for information will always be given.

4. How to make a request

A large amount of information is freely available on the Council's website, which can be found at:- www.telscombetowncouncil.gov.uk

If you are unable to find the information you are looking for, you can request the information directly from the Council.

The preferred method for requesting information from the Council is in writing; either email or letter, to ensure the request is clearly understood. Requests should be made to:-

The Town Clerk, Telscombe Town Council, Telscombe Civic Centre, 360 South Coast Road, Telscombe Cliffs, E Sussex, BN10 7ES

Or via email:- stella.newman@telscombetowncouncil.gov.uk

The request should provide as full a description as possible of the information you require, and your preferred method for receiving the information.

5. Complaints

The Council would normally expect the Clerk or other named officer to understand what information you have asked for and be able to tell you where you can find it. If the information you received is not what you asked for or need, you should contact the Clerk or named officer to clarify your requirements.

If you believe that the Council has not dealt with your request fairly and it cannot be resolved on an informal basis, you should follow our complaints procedure.

If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still not happy with how we have dealt with your request, you may also contact the Information Commissioner's Office to ask them to investigate further. They can be contacted via the website www.ico.gov.uk or telephone 0303 123 1113 or by writing to - The Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

6. Charges

Charges made by the Council in relation to the publication scheme will be justified, transparent and kept to a minimum.

Information which is published and accessed on the Council's website is provided free of charge.

Charges will be made for actual disbursements incurred as detailed below:

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DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Photocopying @ 10p per A4 sheet (black & white only)	Actual cost incurred
Photocopying @ 12p per A3 sheet (black & white only)	Actual cost incurred
Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class postage

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act there is an upper limit above which the Town Council does not have to provide information. This limit for local authorities is £450. The general guideline for working out whether or not a request may exceed this total is whether the amount of work involved in retrieving the information is likely to exceed 18 hours of one person's time charged at an hourly rate of £25.

Policy	Freedom of Information Policy
Review Cycle	Every 3 years, or earlier in the event of legislative changes
Date Last Adopted	14 th May 2025
Previous Adoption Dates	15 th May 2019 & 18 th May 2022
Responsibility	Policy & Resources Committee and then adoption by Full Council