

Sutton Parish Council

Proposed for adoption

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Welcome

Sutton Parish Council has always adopted an open policy of transparency, and will continue to seek ways of achieving even greater transparency to the benefit of all Sutton residents.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) received Royal Assent on 30th November 2000. Under this Act every Public Authority is required to adopt and maintain a publication policy setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it intends to publish and disseminate that information and whether a charge will be made for access to such information.

Introduction

The principal objective of Sutton Parish Council is to assist the residents of Sutton create community values; of benefit to the whole neighbourhood. It is the duty of the Parish Council to provide its' community with quality services at an acceptable cost and to strive continually to improve the delivery of public services within all areas of its responsibility.

What is the Publication Scheme?

The aim of the Scheme is to provide guidance to the public on what information is available and how to obtain it. The information is broken down into 'Classes' to reflect the types of activities in which the Parish Council is involved. Information will be published formally either, or both, as printed material or in electronic format.

It is expected, over time, that the amount of information available will increase and additional Classes will be added. To date the Classes have been grouped into the following categories:-

1. Council Internal Practice and Procedures
2. Code of Conduct
3. Periodic Electoral Review
4. Employment Practice and Procedure
5. Planning Documents
6. Audit and Accounts
7. Development and Implementation of Policy
8. Residents' Correspondence
9. Council Circulars and Newsletters
10. Allotments
11. Best Value

Exemptions

It is Sutton Parish Council's policy to be as open and transparent as possible. However, not all information can be made available to the public. Information will be made available where the law allows, except where it is considered that the release of that information will cause significant harm or prejudice. Information (including that listed in this document) may be withheld from publication, in whole or in part, where it is considered by the Parish Council that disclosure may harm, or prejudice, law enforcement, legal proceedings or the administration of justice; or may infringe privacy and/or personal, commercial, contractual or other confidences of any person or otherwise infringe their rights; or because disclosure is otherwise prohibited by law. In such cases the Parish Council will withhold the information and indicate the relevant exemption under the appropriate legislation. If you wish to complain about any information having been withheld, you are referred to the section on 'Complaints Procedures'.

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Archiving Policy

It is impossible for Sutton Parish Council to keep all information forever, therefore in line with the Parish Councils Records Management Policy it will be either destroyed or archived. The Publication Scheme will indicate for how long information is kept, and whether it is archived or destroyed after this time. If it is archived then the County Record Office will need to be contacted directly.

Access to Information

All information listed in the Publication Scheme can be viewed by appointment by contacting: -

The Clerk
Sutton Parish Council
10 Robins Field
Wansford
Peterborough
PE8 6JW
Tel/Fax: 01780 783678
Email: patricia.stuarmogg@btinternet.com

Alternatively, copies of information can be supplied either in paper format or electronically.

All information not covered by an exemption will ordinarily be released to the applicant within 20 working days of receipt of the request, unless it is necessary to issue a fees notice (see below for details).

Charging policy

The majority of cases will not attract charges other than those set out in the scheme for photocopying, disks, postage etc. However if the request for information is likely to exceed the Appropriate Limit (which is deemed to be 18 hours of staff time) a charge will be made of £25.00 per hour plus expenses for any additional time above 18 hours.

The applicant will be issued with a Fees Notice and must pay the costs specified therein within a period of three months. The Parish Council is under no obligation to supply the information requested until the applicant has paid the requisite amount. If the costs are not paid within the three months then the request lapses.

The Parish Clerk will, in the first instance, consider all requests for the release of information and issue a Fees Notice if appropriate.

Complaints

Any complaints concerning the publication scheme should be forwarded to:-

The Chairman
Sutton Parish Council
C/O 10 Robins Field
Wansford
Peterborough
PE8 6JW

Publication Scheme

In accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 section 20 Sutton Parish Council will have routinely available the following information.

1) COUNCIL INTERNAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Agendas and supporting papers for council, committee and sub-committee meetings-limited to the last 2 years.

Minutes of council, committee and sub-committee meetings – limited to the last 2 years.

Procedural Standing Orders

Councils Annual Report to Parish Meeting

Terms of Reference for Committees

There will be 20p charge per sheet for supplying the above information in paper format

There will be £2.50 charge per floppy/CD disk for supplying the above information in electronic format.

2) CODE OF CONDUCT

Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Members Register of Interests

Register of Members Interests Book

3) PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW

Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the council area

Information relating to the latest boundary review of the council area

4) EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Terms & conditions of employment

Job descriptions

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health & Safety Policy

Staffing Structure

Exclusions – personal data relating to employees as stipulated under the Data Protection Act 1998

5) PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Responses to planning applications – limited to the last 12months

Parish Plan (currently not produced by the Council)

6) AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS

Annual return form – limited to the last financial year

Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external) – limited to the last financial year

Receipt/Payment books; Receipt books of all kinds; Bank Statements from all accounts – limited to the last financial year

Precept request – limited to the last financial year

VAT records – limited to the last financial year

Financial Standing Orders and Regulations

Assets Register

Risk Assessments

Loan sanction approvals

Fees and charges applied by the Council

Safety inspection records

Register/file of members' allowances

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7) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

Policy Statements issued by Council
Responses made by the Council to consultation papers
Analysis of responses received to public consultations by the Council
Parish Appraisal
Complaints handling procedure

8) BYELAWS

Currently the no byelaws set by the Parish Council

9) RESIDENTS' CORRESPONDENCE

Residents' Correspondence will be held for a period of one year and thereafter destroyed, or archived if pertaining to important local issues or activities. Information may be wholly or partially withheld if the Parish Council considers that disclosure is subject to the exemptions above or under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Anonymous mail will be destroyed on receipt and will not be recorded or kept in any format.

9) COUNCIL CIRCULARS / NEWSLETTERS

Parish Newsletters

10) ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & TOURIST INFORMATION –

Only information produced by the City Council is held.

11) ALLOTMENTS

Plans
Standard Tenancy Agreements
Exclusions – individual tenancy agreements and rent payment records under both privacy and data protection laws

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Management of Records Policy

Key P = Preserve permanently R = Review D = Destroy

Record	Action	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Administration			
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	P	Indefinite	Archives
Reports & other documents circulated with agendas not attached to signed Minutes	R	Indefinite	
Agendas (if Minutes do not survive)	P	Indefinite	
Councillors' Declarations of Office	P	Indefinite	Archives
Nomination forms for parish council elections (if minutes do not survive)	P	Indefinite	
Byelaws and Orders	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title Deeds	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Registration of Village Greens, plans, etc	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Property registers & terriers, including register and plans for allotments	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Maps, plans & surveys of property owned by the Council/Meeting	P	Indefinite	Archives
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	P	Indefinite	Archives
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments, and also planning appeal decisions	P	Indefinite	
Leases, Agreements, Contracts & Wayleaves	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Quotations & tenders for major works	R	12years/Indefinite	Statute of limitation
Quotations and tenders for minor works	D	12 years	Statue of limitation
Unsuccessful tenders	D	3 years	Challenge
Routine correspondence, papers & emails	D	Retain as long as useful	
Personnel records	D	3 months	Limitation period
Health & Safety records		Indefinite	
Planning Applications & related papers for minor works where permission is refused	D	Retain until appeal period has expired	
Scale if Fees and Charges	D	5 years	Management
Insurance Policies	D	Retain while valid	
Finance			
Receipts and payments books	P	Indefinite	Archives

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Investments	P	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Financial Returns to External Auditor (if general accounts do not survive)	D/P	6 years	Audit
Internal Auditor Reports	D/P	6 years	Audit
Cash & Petty Cash books & Rent Books (if general accounts do not survive)	D/R	6 years	TAX, VAT, Limitation period
Receipt books of all kinds	D	6 years	VAT
Postage and Telephone Books	D	6 years	TAX, VAT, Limitation period
Bank Statements, including deposit/saving accounts	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank Paying-in books and cheque book stubs	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Paid Invoices	D	6 years	VAT
Paid Cheques	D	6 years	Limitation period
VAT Records	D	6 years	VAT
Time Sheets	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wage Books	D	12 years	Limitation period
Member Allowances Register	D	6 years	TAX Limitation
Records relating to parish halls, centres and recreation grounds; applications to hire, lettings diaries, copies of bills to hirers and records of ticket issue.	D	6 years	VAT
Precept books and contribution orders	D	Retain as long as of value	
Miscellaneous			
Maps created under provision of the Rights of Way Act 1992	P	Indefinite	Archives
Community Magazines/New Letters	D	5 years	
Press cuttings books	P	Indefinite	
Photographs	P	Indefinite	
Any records dating from before 1894 now held by the Council	P	Indefinite	Historical
Records of other bodies such as burial boards, charities, fire brigades, home guard units, local societies and <i>ad hoc</i> committees	P	See admin and finances	
ALL burial ground records (registers, plans, applications for internment & memorials and copy certificate of grant of exclusive right of burial)	P	Indefinite	Archives Cemeteries Orders & Regulations
Reports, Guides, handbooks etc received by the Council from other bodies	R/D	Retain as long as useful	
Planning Applications & related papers for minor works where permission is granted	D	Retain until development has been completed	