



Freedom of Information Statement & Publication Scheme

December 2024

Version ID	Description of Change	Version Sponsor	Policy Owner	Version creation date	Version Approval Date	Next Review Date
1.0	Initial policy creation	Sheridan Jacklin-Edward	Policy & Resources Committee	05/10/18	15/10/18	15/10/19
1.1	Factual / minor amendment to publication scheme – new policies available on website	Sheridan Jacklin-Edward	Policy & Resources Committee	17/10/18	n/a	n/a
2.0	Policy review	Adam Killeya	Policy & Resources Committee	15/08/24	09/12/24	Sept-27

Freedom of information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you the right to request information held by all UK public bodies, including Burnham Parish Council. The Act is designed to:

- Encourage greater openness and accountability in the services we provide
- Help improve the level of trust in public authorities
- Encourage improvements in the way we interact with you

In considering requests the council will act in compliance with the act, and will have regard to guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office, which can be found on their website.

Responsibilities

The Parish Clerk will be responsible for responding to requests under the scheme, and for maintaining appropriate records of requests and the responses. They may delegate some of these tasks to other appropriate staff, whilst retaining overall responsibility for them.

Publication scheme

The Act requires authorities to maintain a Publication Scheme, which uses the model publication scheme for public authorities published by the Information Commissioner's Office. This is a guide to the information that we publish as a matter of routine. Our Publication Scheme (Appendix 1) sets out the classes of information that we publish, how it will be published and accessed, what fees there might be, and the procedure for making requests. The scheme is intended to ensure that a wide range of information is easily available without the need to make specific requests for information.

For information not held on our Publication Scheme or available through other means, for example, our website, any person may make a request in writing to us asking for information. Subject to legal restrictions, we are obliged to state whether we hold that information and, if so, we are required to provide a copy.

In providing information, reasonable adjustments will be made for any accessibility needs. The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 also require public sector bodies in the UK to make their websites and apps accessible to all users, including those with disabilities.

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act 2018 gives you the right to access your own personal data, and all requests for personal information are treated in line with this Act, not the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For more information, please see our GDPR, data, privacy and CCTV policy, or contact us on the details below.

How to make a request for information

If you wish to make a request for information, you will need to do so in writing, by email or post, to the Parish Clerk via the contact details below. Please provide a clear description of the information you require, your name and contact details.

If you need advice or assistance in making a request, please contact the Parish Clerk using the contact details below.

Timescales

In general the council must reply promptly, and no later than 20 working days following receipt of a request. There are some extensions that apply outlined in Section 10 of the act, for example an additional 20 working days in more complex cases where we need more time to consider the public interest test.

Refusal of an FOI request

Where the Council determines to refuse a request in the Freedom of Information Act, it still clearly state the legal basis for this refusal and the reasons why it believe these grounds to apply in writing.

Payment and limits

Charges will not be made for the time involved in processing requests, although the cost of that time will be used to calculate whether a request exceeds the statutory limit. This is £450 calculated at a flat rate of £25 per hour of work; the £450 limit as of 2024 is equivalent to 18 hours of work. In this event, the council will offer assistance to the requester in narrowing their request to fall within these limits.

For information on our charges for photocopying and postage, please see the Publication Scheme (Appendix 1).

Vexatious requests

Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act states that we are not obliged “to comply with a request for information if the request is vexatious.”

This provision is a deliberately ‘high hurdle’, designed not to allow councils to frustrate reasonable requests for information, or to prevent information released on the grounds that it would be embarrassing or otherwise damaging. Burnham Parish Council follows guidance from the Information Commissioners Office on this provision, which can be found online at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/section-14-dealing-with-vexatious-requests/>

‘Vexatious’ is defined as “...manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure.” And the key question for councils is “whether the request is likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress”.

A clear-cut case of a vexatious request would be where the requests uses abusive language or includes threats against councillors or staff.

In judging whether a request is vexatious the Parish Clerk will have regard to these four tests

1. the burden (on the public authority and its staff);
2. the motive (of the requester);
3. the value or serious purpose (of the request); and
4. any harassment or distress (of and to staff).

having regard to the detailed advice issued by the ICO, adopting a holistic approach, and identifying and considering any other relevant factors.

Contact details

Email: clerk@burnhamparish.gov.uk

Telephone: 01628 661381

Address: Parish Clerk, Burnham Park Hall, Windsor Lane, Burnham, SL1 7HR

**Burnham Parish Council
Publication Scheme**

December 2024

All items available on the website are also available in hard copy, with charges on request.

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1: who we are and what we do		
Who's who on the Council and its committees	Website	n/a
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members	Website	n/a
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website	n/a
Staffing structure	Website	n/a
Class 2: what we spend and how we spend it		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website	n/a
Finalised budget	Website	n/a
Precept	Website	n/a
Borrowing Approval letter	Hard or emailed copy	On request
Financial Regulations	Website	n/a
Grants given and received	Hard or emailed copy	On request
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard or emailed copy	On request
Members' allowances (if paid) and expenses	Hard or emailed copy	On request
Payments over £500	Website	n/a
Asset register	Website	n/a
Staff Pay Multiple and Senior Salaries	Website	n/a
Community Infrastructure Levy reports	Website	n/a
Class 3: what our priorities are and how we are doing		
Annual Report to Annual Parish Meeting	Website	n/a
Parish Plan where there is one active	Website	n/a

Council services – as detailed in section 7 below	Website	n/a
Class 4: how we make decisions		
Timetable of meetings	Website	n/a
Agendas of meetings	Website	n/a
Minutes of meetings	Website	n/a
Reports presented to council meetings (this will exclude confidential reports)	Website	On request
Responses to consultations	Hard or emailed copy	On request
Responses to planning applications (within the minutes of the planning committee)	Website	n/a
Class 5: our policies and procedures		
Standing orders	Website	n/a
Committee and sub-committee terms of reference	Website	n/a
Delegated authority in respect of officers	Website	n/a
Code of Conduct	Website	n/a
Staff handbook	Website	n/a
Equality and diversity policy	Website	n/a
Complaints procedures	Website	n/a
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Website	n/a
GDPR, data, privacy and CCTV policy	Website	n/a
All other policies as deemed necessary and appropriate from time to time	Website	n/a
Parking information and charges		
Class 6: lists and registers		
Assets register	Website	n/a
Register of members' interests	Website – Buckinghamshire Council	n/a
Register of gifts and hospitality	Website – Buckinghamshire Council	n/a

Class 7: the services we offer		
Allotments	n/a	n/a
Burnham Park Hall	Website and Hall website	n/a
Streetlights and outdoor furniture	Website	n/a
Memorial Benches	Website	n/a
Public toilets	Website	n/a
Motor Vehicle Activated Signs	Website	n/a
Grants	Website	n/a
George Pitcher Memorial Ground	Website	n/a
Other services as deemed necessary and appropriate from time to time	Website	n/a

Contact details:

For more information, please contact the Parish Clerk on the details below:

Address: Burnham Park, Windsor Lane, Burnham, SL1 7HR

Telephone: 01628 661381

Email: clerk@burnhamparish.gov.uk

Schedule of charges

Type of charge	Description	Basis of charge
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 5p per sheet (black & white or colour)	Actual cost
	Postage – Royal Mail standard 2 nd class	Actual cost