Coney Weston Parish Council

Policy and Procedure for Handling Requests for Information

The Parish Council has adopted a Model Publication Scheme with effect from September 2020. This represents the Council's commitment to release information in a recognised format.

A guide detailing the information that is routinely published and how this information can be accessed is published separately.

1. Verbal requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) will be requested to be put in written form (email will be acceptable) giving the name, correspondence address and details of information required. Information requested under the Environmental Information Regulations Act 2004 (EIR) do not necessarily need to be in writing, although it is the Council's own policy that all such requests should be in written form. Requests for information do not need to refer to FOI or EIR.

2. The Parish Council shall provide proper advice and help to any member of the public seeking information.

3. The Clerk shall agree with the Chairman of the Parish Council whether the requested information is freely accessible, whether it is available in the requested form, whether a Refusal Notice needs to be served in respect of all or part of the requested information and what charges will be levied and the timescale for delivery of the information.

4. The Clerk shall acknowledge a request in writing within three days of receipt of the request and provide a date by which it is anticipated the information will be provided which shall be within 20 working days in normal circumstances. If it is not reasonably possible to provide the information within 20 working days of receipt of the information, the reasons for the delay and a target date shall be provided which must not exceed 40 working days.

5. A fee notice will be issued (if applicable) confirming that the information is held and giving an estimate of the cost of providing the information within a limit of £450. The Council may refuse requests that exceed this limit in which case a refusal notice will be issued (see Policy Reference 6 and 7). Where a fee is to be charged no information will be provided until after the fee has been received, the 20-day period will be extended by up to three months awaiting payment. After the fee has been received, a response will be given within 20 days.

6. If a Refusal Notice is issued in respect of all or part of the requested information it shall state that the Parish Council is relying upon an exemption and why it applies.

Details of the Internal Review procedure shall be enclosed with the Notice and the right of appeal to[1] the Information Commissioner.

7. If a Refusal Notice is issued in respect of all or part of the requested information for any of the following reasons:

a The cost of complying with the request will exceed £450

b The Parish Council is unable to identify the information despite every reasonable attempt so to do

c The Parish Council considers the request to be vexatious (i.e. to cause harm and/or annoyance rather than to obtain information)

d The information has already been provided or is freely accessible without reference to the Parish Council then details of the right of appeal to the Information Commissioner shall be provided.

8. If the requested information cannot be found within the Parish Council records then the applicant shall be advised, accordingly, as soon as the search is completed. Details of the Internal Review procedure shall be provided and of the right of appeal to the Information Commissioner.

9. Provided the fee is paid and no exemptions apply the Council are obliged to disclose the information.

10. The Parish Council shall maintain a record of FOI requests.

Reviewed and re-adopted September 2025

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