

Review of Parish Policies

April 2022

Parish Policies should be reviewed annual to ensure that they are kept up to date and relevant.

The following policies have been reviewed and are attached as appendices:

- A. Complaints policy – Appendix A
- B. Document & Electronic Data Retention – Appendix B
- C. Equality and Diversity – Appendix C
- D. Freedom of Information (Including Publication Scheme & Requests for Info - Appendix D
- E. Health & Safety – Appendix E
- F. Media Policy – Appendix F

The clerk has reviewed these against the templates available from SLCC (the Clerk's professional body) and updated where appropriate.

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Recommendation:

The policies identified at A – F be re-adopted and published

ADVICE NOTE: Complaints Handling and Model Complaints Procedure

Clear guidance on handling complaints has been produced by the Local Government Ombudsman and can be accessed from the publications page of the LGO website (www.lgo.org.uk). Although directed at principal councils in England, parish and community councils may also find this guidance helpful. In addition, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has published general guidance (including *Principles of Good Administration* and *Principles for Remedy*).

It is important that the council's response to a complaint is "proportionate and timely". The LGO guidance for principal councils suggests that most complaints should be resolved within twelve weeks of receipt of the complaint. In many cases, resolution may be possible within a much shorter timescale. Often an acknowledgement that something has gone wrong and an apology are all that the complainant wants.

Not all complaints are justified or well-founded. Sometimes councils may find themselves being called upon to respond repeatedly to an individual or group of individuals where that council has already investigated the matter under complaint (or something very similar) and has concluded that the complaint is without substance. In these cases, the LGO's 'Guidance note on management of unreasonable complainant behaviour' offers useful suggestions for the approach which may be taken and is readily applied to first-tier councils.

The following text forms the basis for a model complaints procedure which can be adapted by parish and community councils to suit their own particular circumstances. All complaints policies require regular reviews and a review every two years might be thought suitable. This enables the council to take account of structural and legal changes such as changes to the standards regime in England brought about by the coming into force of provisions in the Localism Act 2011.

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Drinkstone Parish Council Complaints Procedure
Adopted on

1. Drinkstone Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on *May 2019* and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council.
4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.
6. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint to the Council .

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8. The Clerk of the Council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
9. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)
10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council (as appropriate) and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

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Drinkstone Parish Council

Document Retention and Disposal Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council accumulates a vast amount of information and data during the course of its everyday activities. This includes data generated internally in addition to information obtained from individuals and external organisations. This information is recorded in various different types of document.
- 1.2 Records created and maintained by the Council are an important asset and as such measures need to be undertaken to safeguard this information. Properly managed records provide authentic and reliable evidence of the Council's transactions and are necessary to ensure it can demonstrate accountability.
- 1.3 Documents may be retained in either 'hard' paper form or in electronic forms. For the purpose of this policy, 'document' and 'record' refers to both hard copy and electronic records.
- 1.4 It is imperative that documents are retained for an adequate period of time. If documents are destroyed prematurely the Council and individual officers concerned could face prosecution for not complying with legislation and it could cause operational difficulties, reputational damage and difficulty in defending any claim brought against the Council.
- 1.5 In contrast to the above the Council should not retain documents longer than is necessary. Timely disposal should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations so that personal information is not retained longer than necessary. This will also ensure the most efficient use of limited storage space.

2. Scope and Objectives of the Policy

- 2.1 The aim of this document is to provide a working framework to determine which documents are:
 - Retained – and for how long; or
 - Disposed of – and if so by what method.
- 2.2 There are some records that do not need to be kept at all or that are routinely destroyed in the course of business. This usually applies to information that is duplicated, unimportant or only of a short-term value. Unimportant records of information include:
 - 'With compliments' slips.
 - Catalogues and trade journals.
 - Non-acceptance of invitations.
 - Trivial electronic mail messages that are not related to Council business.
 - Requests for information such as maps, plans or advertising material.
 - Out of date distribution lists.

- 2.3 Duplicated and superseded material such as stationery, manuals, drafts, forms, address books and reference copies of annual reports may be destroyed.
- 2.4 Records should not be destroyed if the information can be used as evidence to prove that something has happened. If destroyed the disposal needs to be disposed of under the General Data Protection Regulations

3. Roles and Responsibilities for Document Retention and Disposal

- 3.1 Councils are responsible for determining whether to retain or dispose of documents and should undertake a review of documentation at least on an annual basis to ensure that any unnecessary documentation being held is disposed of under the General Data Protection Regulations.
- 3.2 Councils should ensure that all employees are aware of the retention/disposal schedule.

4. Document Retention Protocol

- 4.1 Councils should have in place an adequate system for documenting the activities of their service. This system should take into account the legislative and regulatory environments to which they work.
- 4.2 Records of each activity should be complete and accurate enough to allow employees and their successors to undertake appropriate actions in the context of their responsibilities to:
 - Facilitate an audit or examination of the business by anyone so authorised.
 - Protect the legal and other rights of the Council, its clients and any other persons affected by its actions.
 - Verify individual consent to record, manage and record disposal of their personal data.
 - Provide authenticity of the records so that the evidence derived from them is shown to be credible and authoritative.
- 4.3 To facilitate this the following principles should be adopted:
 - Records created and maintained should be arranged in a record-keeping system that will enable quick and easy retrieval of information under the General Data Protection Regulations
 - Documents that are no longer required for operational purposes but need retaining should be placed at the records office.
- 4.4 The retention schedules in Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention or Disposal provide guidance on the recommended minimum retention periods for specific classes of documents and records. These schedules have been compiled from recommended best practice from the Public Records Office, the Records Management Society of Great Britain and in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 4.5 Whenever there is a possibility of litigation, the records and information that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has been removed.

5. Document Disposal Protocol

5.1 Documents should only be disposed of if reviewed in accordance with the following:

- Is retention required to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements?
- Is retention required to meet the operational needs of the service?
- Is retention required to evidence events in the case of dispute?
- Is retention required because the document or record is of historic interest or intrinsic value?

5.2 When documents are scheduled for disposal the method of disposal should be appropriate to the nature and sensitivity of the documents concerned. A record of the disposal will be kept to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.

5.3 Documents can be disposed of by any of the following methods:

- Non-confidential records: place in waste paper bin for disposal.
- Confidential records or records giving personal information: shred documents.
- Deletion of computer records.
- Transmission of records to an external body such as the County Records Office.

5.4 The following principles should be followed when disposing of records:

- All records containing personal or confidential information should be destroyed at the end of the retention period. Failure to do so could lead to the Council being prosecuted under the General Data Protection Regulations.
- the Freedom of Information Act or cause reputational damage.
- Where computer records are deleted steps should be taken to ensure that data is 'virtually impossible to retrieve' as advised by the Information Commissioner.
- Where documents are of historical interest it may be appropriate that they are transmitted to the County Records office.
- Back-up copies of documents should also be destroyed (including electronic or photographed documents unless specific provisions exist for their disposal).

5.5 Records should be maintained of appropriate disposals. These records should contain the following information:

- The name of the document destroyed.
- The date the document was destroyed.
- The method of disposal.

6. Data Protection Act 1998 – Obligation to Dispose of Certain Data

6.1 The Data Protection Act 1998 ('Fifth Principle') requires that personal information must not be retained longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was originally obtained. Section 1 of the Data Protection Act defines personal information as:

Data that relates to a living individual who can be identified: a)
from the data, or

b) from those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of the data controller.

It includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the Council or other person in respect of the individual.

6.2 The Data Protection Act provides an exemption for information about identifiable living individuals that is held for research, statistical or historical purposes to be held indefinitely provided that the specific requirements are met.

6.3 Councils are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the principles of the under the General Data Protection Regulations namely:

- Personal data is processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met.
- Personal data shall only be obtained for specific purposes and processed in a compatible manner.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant, but not excessive.
- Personal data shall be accurate and up to date.
- Personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary.
- Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of the data subject.
- Personal data shall be kept secure.

6.4 External storage providers or archivists that are holding Council documents must also comply with the above principles of the General Data Protection Regulations.

7. Scanning of Documents

7.1 In general once a document has been scanned on to a document image system the original becomes redundant. There is no specific legislation covering the format for which local government records are retained following electronic storage, except for those prescribed by HM Revenue and Customs.

7.2 As a general rule hard copies of scanned documents should be retained for three months after scanning.

7.3 Original documents required for VAT and tax purposes should be retained for six years unless a shorter period has been agreed with HM Revenue and Customs.

8. Review of Document Retention

8.1 It is planned to review, update and where appropriate amend this document on a regular basis (at least every three years in accordance with the *Code of Practice on the Management of Records* issued by the Lord Chancellor).

8.2 This document has been compiled from various sources of recommended best practice and with reference to the following documents and publications:

- *Local Council Administration*, Charles Arnold-Baker, 910^h edition, Chapter 11
- NALC LTN 40 – *Local Councils' Documents and Records*, January 2013
- NALC LTN 37 – *Freedom of Information*, July 2009
- *Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records* issued under Section 46 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*

9. List of Documents

9.1 The full list of the Council's documents and the procedures for retention or disposal can be found in Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention and Disposal. This is updated regularly in accordance with any changes to legal requirements.

(Drinkstone Parish Council) Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention or Disposal

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed paper copies of Council minutes of meetings must be kept indefinitely in safe storage. At regular intervals of not more than 5 years they must be archived and deposited with the Higher Authority
Agendas	5 years	Management	Bin (shred confidential waste)
Accident/incident reports	20 years	Potential claims	Confidential waste A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management	Bin
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	N/A
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT	Bin
Bank statements including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Confidential waste A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Confidential waste

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
VAT records	6 years generally but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT	Confidential waste
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Confidential waste
Timesheets	Last completed audit year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)	Bin
Wages books/payroll	12 years	Superannuation	Confidential waste
Insurance policies	While valid (but see next two items below)	Management	Bin
Insurance company names and policy numbers	Indefinite	Management	N/A
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753) Management	Bin
Town Park equipment inspection reports	21 years		
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	N/A
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	N/A
Members' allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Information from other bodies e.g. circulars from county associations, NALC, principal authorities	Retained for as long as it is useful and relevant		Bin
Local/historical information	Indefinite – to be securely kept for benefit of the Parish	Councils may acquire records of local interest and accept gifts or records of general and local interest in order to promote the	N/A

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
		use for such records (defined as materials in written or other form setting out facts or events or otherwise recording information).	
Magazines and journals	<p>Council may wish to keep its own publications</p> <p>For others retain for as long as they are useful and relevant.</p>	The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 (the 2003 Act) requires a local council which after 1 st February 2004 has published works in print (this includes a pamphlet, magazine or newspaper, a map, plan, chart or table) to deliver, at its own expense, a copy of them to the British Library Board (which manages and controls the British Library). Printed works as defined by the 2003 Act published by a local council therefore constitute materials which the British Library holds.	Bin if applicable
Record-keeping			
<p>To ensure records are easily accessible it is necessary to comply with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of files stored in cabinets will be kept • Electronic files will be saved using relevant file names 	The electronic files will be backed up periodically on a portable hard drive and also in the cloud-based programme supplied by the Council's IT company.	Management	<p>Documentation no longer required will be disposed of, ensuring any confidential documents are destroyed as confidential waste.</p> <p>A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.</p>

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
General correspondence	Unless it relates to specific categories outlined in the policy, correspondence, both paper and electronic, should be kept. Records should be kept for as long as they are needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements or to protect legal and other rights and interests.	Management	Bin (shred confidential waste) A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Correspondence relating to staff	If related to Audit, see relevant sections above. Should be kept securely and personal data in relation to staff should not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held. Likely time limits for tribunal claims between 3–6 months Recommend this period be for 3 years	After an employment relationship has ended, a council may need to retain and access staff records for former staff for the purpose of giving references, payment of tax, national insurance contributions and pensions, and in respect of any related legal claims made against the council.	Confidential waste A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
<p>Documents from legal matters, negligence and other torts</p> <p>Most legal proceedings are governed by the Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. Where the limitation periods are longer than other periods specified the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified. Some types of legal proceedings may fall within two or more categories.</p>			

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
If in doubt, keep for the longest of the three limitation periods.			
Negligence	6 years		Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Defamation	1 year		Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Contract	6 years		Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Leases	12 years		Confidential waste.
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years		Confidential waste.
Personal injury	3 years		Confidential waste.
To recover land	12 years		Confidential waste.
Rent	6 years		Confidential waste.
Breach of trust	None		Confidential waste.
Trust deeds	Indefinite		N/A
For Halls, Centres, Recreation Grounds			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application to hire • Invoices • Record of tickets issued 	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Lettings diaries	Electronic files linked to accounts	VAT	N/A
Terms and Conditions	6 years	Management	Bin

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
Event Monitoring Forms	6 years unless required for claims, insurance or legal purposes	Management	Bin. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
For Allotments			
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management	N/A
Minutes	Indefinite	Audit, Management	N/A
Legal papers	Indefinite	Audit, Management	N/A
Planning Papers			
Applications	1 year	Management	Bin
Appeals	1 year unless significant development	Management	Bin
Trees	1 year	Management	Bin
Local Development Plans	Retained as long as in force	Reference	Bin
Local Plans	Retained as long as in force	Reference	Bin
Town/Neighbourhood Plans	Indefinite – final adopted plans	Historical purposes	N/A
CCTV			
Daily notes	Daily	Data protection	Confidential waste
Radio rotas	1 week	Management	Confidential waste
Work rotas	1 month	Management	Confidential waste
Observation sheets	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
Stats	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste
Signing in sheets	3 years	Management	Confidential waste
Review requests	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste
Discs – master and working	For as long as required	Data protection	Confidential waste
Internal Operations Procedure Manual	Destroy on renewal Review annually	Management	Confidential waste
Code of Practice	Destroy on renewal Review annually	Management	Confidential waste
Photographs/digital prints	31 days	Data protection	Confidential waste

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EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Drinkstone Parish Council (“Council”) is committed to ensuring that, in the exercise of its functions, it fulfils its legal responsibilities under all legislation concerning equality and diversity and does not engage in unlawful discrimination within the Council (including staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors) and in the delivery of its service to the public. opportunities.

The Council will actively develop positive practices which promote equality of opportunity and enable residents and customers to fully participate and staff to realise their full potential. No resident, customer, job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, creed, nationality, ethnic or national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or will be disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be justified.

The Council will ensure that all decisions on participation, recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career development are based on abilities, merits, and objective job-related criteria.

All Staff and Councillors are required to behave in a non-discriminatory manner and to create a culture in which people can feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance.

Commitments:

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious learning environment in which all men and women are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment is tolerated
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to termination of membership.

Implementation:

The Chairman and all members of the Council have the responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. All members are expected to create the equality environment, which is its objective. In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to members by issuing a copy of this document to all its members.
- Where appropriate, the Council will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that it will not consciously, or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants for membership of the Council.
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into roles and responsibilities of the Council.
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

Monitoring and Review:

We will establish appropriate and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be reviewed annually and remedial action will be taken as necessary.

Notes to the Policy:

Acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, in relevant circumstances and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice in the case of staff.

Sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights/Code of Conduct and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

The Council has a corporate Complaints Procedure.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

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Drinkstone Parish Council

Publication Scheme

This publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public. Classes of Information

Who we are and what we do.

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it.

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how we are doing.

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions.

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures.

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and Registers.

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

The Services we Offer.

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

Drinkstone Parish Council

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained. Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means. In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale. Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so. Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for Information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written Requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Drinkstone Parish Council

Information available from Drinkstone Parish Council under the Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) This will be current information only		
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk, Website	10p per sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Village Notice Board, Website Or contact the Clerk	Free
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Drinkstone PC do not have a main office	
Staffing structure	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website – Hard copy - contact the clerk	10p per sheet
Finalised budget	Hard Copy – contact the clerk - Website	10p per sheet
Precept	Via Minutes, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk; Website	10p per sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	Drinkstone PC do not currently borrow	
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hard Copy – contact the clerk - Website	10p per sheet

Drinkstone Parish Council

Grants given and received	Hard Copy – contact the clerk	10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy – contact the clerk	10p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy – contact the clerk	10p per sheet
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)		
Parish Plan	Website Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy – contact the clerk	10p per sheet
Quality status	Drinkstone PC do not currently have Quality Status	
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	There are currently no charters in operation	
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum		
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website, Notice Board, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website, Notice Board, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet

Drinkstone Parish Council

Responses to consultation papers	Hard Copy – contact the clerk, Via minutes on PC Website or District Council website	10p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Hard Copy – contact the clerk, Via minutes on Website or District Council website	10p per sheet
Bye-laws	Drinkstone PC do not currently have any byelaws	
<p>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only</p>		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk, Website	10p per sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Internal policies relating to the delivery of services Equality and diversity policy Health and safety policy Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk, Website – Contact the clerk	10p per sheet
Information security policy Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive) Data protection policies	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk,	10p per sheet

Drinkstone Parish Council

Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Within this document	
Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only	(some information may only be available by inspection)	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	None held	
Assets Register	Hard Copy – contact the Clerk - Website	10p per sheet
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	None held	
Register of members’ interests	District Council website, Hard Copy – contact the Clerk	10p per sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	None held	
Class 7 – The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses) Current information only	(some information may only be available by inspection)	
Allotments	Drinkstone PC runs two allotment sites - Contact the clerk for details	
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Drinkstone PC do not currently have a cemetery and are not responsible for a closed churchyard	
Community centres and village halls	Drinkstone Village Hall – Contact details available on VH notice board	Free
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Playground – for info contact the Clerk	
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	for info contact the Clerk	
Bus shelters	for info contact the Clerk	

Drinkstone Parish Council

Markets	Drinkstone PC do not currently operate a market
Public conveniences	Drinkstone PC do not currently operate a public convenience
Agency agreements	Not applicable
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Not applicable
Additional Information	
None	

Contact details:

Jane Hill - The Clerk
 The Old Rectory
 Drinkstone
 IP30 9SR

Tel: 07903050930
 E-mail: drinkstoneclerk@gmail.com

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Colour copying not available	
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee	Not applicable	
Other	Staff time @ £25.00 per hour	Recommended by ICO

* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

Drinkstone Parish Council

Requests for Information Policy

Drinkstone Parish Council has an obligation to make information available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act. The procedure for dealing with applications is as follows;

To make a request under the Freedom of Information Act please contact the Parish Council in writing to the Clerk by letter or email (drinkstoneclerk@gmail.com).

Please ensure to include;

Your full name

Your address and postcode

Your email address and/or telephone number (in case of query)

Details of the information you are requesting. Please be as specific as possible to help reduce the time needed to deal with your request – this could affect any costs that you may incur.

Send your request to

Jane Hill - The Clerk
The Old Rectory
Drinkstone
IP30 9SR
07903 050930

Or email drinkstoneclerk@gmail.com

Drinkstone Parish Council will respond by;

Entering details of your request into its Freedom of Information log book and sending you an acknowledgement.

You will be informed of the date of commencement of the statutory 20 working day period.

You will be advised of the cost that you will need to pay for your request - the payment will be required before the information is provided.

The Parish Council will provide the information you have requested within 20 working days or explain why it is unable to do so.

A request may be refused where;

The request is vexatious or repeated

The cost of complying with the request exceeds the 'appropriate limit'

The information requested falls under one of the exemptions listed in Part II of the Freedom of Information Act.

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy sets out the general principles and approach that the Parish Council will follow in respect of Health and Safety legislation for premises and activities for which it is responsible.

2. Scope of the policy

2.1 The Parish Council aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, residents and members of the public within its area, who may be affected by the Council's activities.

2.2. The Parish Council will ensure that any buildings and amenities belonging to the Council are properly managed by the Council and that the Council set up and monitor appropriate Health and Safety policies and procedures for the protection of the public.

2.3. Councillors are required to take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety when carrying out duties on behalf of the Parish Council.

3. The Parish Clerk

3.1 If the Parish Clerk works from home, he/she must ensure that he/she works in a safe working environment.

3.2 This includes observing the legal recommendations for safe handling, the use of computer equipment, and workstation design.

4. Contractors, Employees and Volunteer Workers.

4.1. The Parish Council will ensure that any contractors or Volunteer Workers employed to carry out work on behalf of the Council have adequate and appropriate Public Liability insurance.

4.2. Contractors and Volunteer Workers will report to the Clerk or any nominated Councillor any hazard or situation encountered during their work, which may affect members of the public.

4.3. Employees, Contractors and Volunteers should:

1. Seek advice on safety and health matters from the Clerk.
2. Make proper use of protective clothing and safety equipment provided.
3. Report immediately to the Clerk any defects in plant, structures, equipment or safety procedures which come to their notice.
4. Report promptly to the Clerk any incidents which have led or might lead to injury or damage and co-operate with any investigation which might be undertaken with the object of preventing accidents or re-occurrence of incidents.

4.4 Employees and volunteers are reminded that they have a duty to care for their own safety and that of other workers and other persons who might be affected by their activities and to co-operate with the Council so as to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities successfully. The final level of responsibility is, however, that of each and every individual.

4.5 A copy of this statement will be issued to all Council employees and Councillors. It will be revised added to or modified from time to time.

5. Roads and footpaths

5.1 The Parish Council is responsible for monitoring the safety of roads and footpaths in its area, and will promptly report any hazards that are brought to its attention to the appropriate authorities for further action.

6. Environment

6.1 The Parish Council will ensure that, as far as possible, the Parish remains a safe and pleasant environment for its residents.

6.2. The Parish Council will obtain specialist technical and Health and Safety advice for any projects or pieces of work that could affect the general public.

6.3 The Council will ensure that any work activities carried out on its behalf do not unreasonably jeopardize the Health and Safety of the general public.

7. Risk assessment

7.1 The Parish Council will carry out a risk assessment of all its activities and review this annually.

7.2 The Council will set up and monitor policies and procedures to reduce any risks that are identified.

8. Council Safety Officer

8.1 The Clerk, as the appointed Safety Officer will:

- Assume the day to day responsibility of ensuring the safety policy is reviewed, maintained, regularly reviewed and adhered to.

- Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices, with subsequent consideration and review of any necessary corrective/protective measures. Maintain a file of risk assessments, summarised in the Minutes.
- Make effective arrangements to ensure those contractors or voluntary helpers working for the Council comply with all reasonable Health and Safety at Work requirements. All contractors will be given a copy of the Council's Health & Safety at Work Policy.

- Maintain a record of notified accidents.

- When an accident or hazardous incident occurs, take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.

- Act as the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety

Inspectorate and obtain specialist technical advice and assistance on matters of Health and Safety where necessary.

9. Review of the policy

9.1. This policy was adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 1 April 2015 and will be reviewed in November 2016 and annually thereafter.

Press and Media Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Council for working with the media and deals with the day-to-day relationship between the Council and the media.

1.2 It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, it provides guidance on how to deal with issues that may arise when dealing with the media.

2 KEYS AIMS

2.1 The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. The media – press, radio, TV, internet – are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Council and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.

2.2 It is important that the press have access to the Clerk/ Members and to background information to assist them in giving accurate information to the public. To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

3 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the governments Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

3.2 The Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders should be adhered to.

4. CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

4.1 The Clerk and Members should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council in all their dealings with the media.

4.2 Confidential documents, exempt Minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who responsible and appropriate action was taken.

4.3 When the media wish to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the Council's solicitor before any response is made. Whenever possible any information given to the press shall be given in writing so as not to leave interpretation open to misunderstanding and misreporting.

4.4 There are a number of personal privacy issues for the Clerk and Members that must be handled carefully and sensitively. These include the release of personal information, such as home address and telephone number (although Member contact details are in the public domain); disciplinary procedures and long-term sickness absences that are affecting service provision. In all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the Clerk before any response is made to the media.

4.5 When responding to approaches from the media, the Clerk or the Chairman are authorised to make contact with the media.

4.6 Statements made by the Chairman and the Clerk should reflect the Council's opinion.

4.7 Other Councillors can talk to the media but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given were their own and not necessarily those of the Council.

4.8 There are occasions when it is appropriate for the Council to submit a letter, for example to explain important policies or to correct factual errors in letters submitted by other correspondents. Such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out over several weeks. All correspondence must come from the Clerk.

5 ATTENDANCES OF MEDIA AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

5.1 The Local Government Act 1972 requires that agendas, reports and minutes are sent to the media on request.

5.2 The media are encouraged to attend Council meetings and seating and workspace will be made available.

5.3 Any filming or taping of Council proceedings by the media must be with prior notice to the Clerk and Chairman of the meeting (see Standing Orders).

6 PRESS RELEASES

6.1 The purpose of a press release is to make the media aware of a potential story, to provide important public information or to explain the Council's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Members to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.

6.2. The Clerk or any Member may draft a press release, however they must all be issued by the Clerk in order to ensure that the principles outlined in section three (Legal Framework) are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the Council and that the use of the press release can be monitored.

8. Changes

This policy will be a living document and will be able to be altered by the Parish Clerk to allow immediate action should the unexpected arise. This will be key to overcoming teething problems that have not already been identified. Changes to the policy will be highlighted at the next Council meeting to keep Members abreast of the changes.

Contact:
Jane Hill - The Clerk
The Old Rectory
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IP30 9SR

Tel: 07903 050930
E-mail: drinkstoneclerk@gmail.com