



**Draft** Freedom of information policy statement and procedures

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FOI.V1	<b>Draft</b>	<b>23 May 2023</b>	<b>May 2026</b>

## **Policy Statement**

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council is committed to complying with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and related legislation. The Freedom of Information Act provides public access to information held by all public authorities.

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council provides this public access in two ways by:

- 1 publishing certain information proactively under the it publication scheme
- 2 responding to requests for information from members of the public or organisations.

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

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council is also committed to complying with the Data Protection Act 2018 which regulates the handling of information about people. It includes the right for people to access their personal data. To comply with both the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection legislation the town council may sometimes use the exemptions specified within the Freedom of Information Act but we maintain a commitment to openness, transparency and scrutiny.

The Town Council's Data Protection policy please is available on our website and as is our general privacy notice.

## **Requests for information**

The town council offers advice and assistance to anybody who wishes to make a formal or informal request for information and is committed to dealing with requests within the statutory timescales. (All requests for information made in writing will be treated as Freedom of Information requests even if the legislation is not cited.)

The right to ask for information only relates to information held by the town 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. the first instance individuals or organisations seeking information are encouraged to look at our [publication scheme](#) which is on our website [www.bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk](http://www.bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk). Our accounts,

minutes and many other documents are readily available on the website but officers will assist those who need help to find specific information.

Email: [info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk) or telephone 01908 649469.

### **Refusal of requests**

In certain circumstances the town 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 town council may refuse to meet a request where the council estimates that the time to comply with the request would be more than 16 hours in such cases a fees notice will be issued requiring a fee to be paid to complete the request.

The town 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.

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

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.

### **Making a request for information**

Under the Freedom of Information Act requests for information must be made in writing (ideally by email or by letter using the contact details at the end of this policy). As much information as possible should be given to enable the town council to identify and locate the information being requested.

The request will be dealt with by the Town Clerk or the Support Services Manager in accordance with this policy and the guidance set by the Information Commissioners Office for dealing with requests.

### **Charges**

In certain circumstances the council may charge a fee for any retrieval and provision of information. Full details of any charges will be notified to the requester in writing before the request is processed.

The Council's Publication Scheme has full details of charges for the provision of hard copies of documents.

## **Appeals**

If the requester is dissatisfied with the outcome of their request for information; usually where a request has been refused or they do not feel that the request has been properly handled, they should first attempt to resolve this by submitting an appeal to the town council following the instructions provided in the decision notice sent with the outcome of the request for information.

If it is still not possible to achieve satisfaction an appeal should be submitted to the Information Commissioner. The contact details for the Information Commissioner Office can be found online at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

Town Council contact details:

**Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council**  
**Sycamore House**  
**Drayton Road**  
**Bletchley**  
**MK2 3RR**

**01908 649469**

**info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk**