

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT – PUBLICATION SCHEME

1. What is Freedom of Information?

- 1.1 Freedom of information provides public access to information held by public authorities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 1.2 Peasmarsh Parish Council (the Council) provides this public access in two ways:
 - Publishing certain information proactively as per the Council’s Publication Scheme;
 - Responding to requests for information from members of the public or organisations.
- 1.3 The Act covers any recorded information that is held by the Council. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

2. What can be requested?

- 2.1 The right to ask for information only relates to information held by the Council at the time the request is made.
- 2.2 A request under the Freedom of Information Act gives a right to ‘information’ rather than specific records or documents.
- 2.3 The Council publishes a wide range of information on its website and as per the Council’s Publication Scheme. Before submitting a request for information, the Council would urge individuals to visit the Council’s website (www.peasmarsh.org.uk) or check the Council’s Publication Scheme as the information required may already be published.

3. Refusal of a request

- 3.1 In certain circumstances the Council may refuse a request for information.
- 3.2 Vexatious and repeated requests and/or applications made with the aim of frustrating the operations of the Council may be refused.

- 3.3 The Council may refuse to meet a request where the Council estimates that the time to comply with the request would be in excess of 5 hours. In such cases a fees notice will be issued requiring a fee to be paid to complete the request.
- 3.4 The 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.
- 3.5 All requests will be considered on their merits and with the aim that information should be made available unless it is clearly not in the public interest to do so. A written explanation for any refusal of a request for information will always be given.

4. Making a request

- 4.1 A request must be made in writing. The request does not need to state the reason why the information is being sought, however as much information as possible must be given to enable the Council to identify and locate the information being requested.
- 4.2 Requests should be made in writing to the Parish Clerk, Peasmarsh Parish Council, 15 Brickfields, Main Street, Peasmarsh, East Sussex TN31 6SS or by email to peasmarshpc@outlook.com
- 4.3 Where an individual is not able to make a request in writing, perhaps as a result of illiteracy, disability or illness, they may ask another person or agency (such as Citizen's Advice Bureau) to help them or make the request on their behalf.

5. Response

- 5.1 The request will be dealt with by the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk will do so in accordance with the guidance set by the Information Commissioners Office for dealing with requests.
- 5.2 The Council will respond promptly to a request for information and in any event, not later than the 20th working day after the request has been received. If for any reason the request is likely to take longer to deal with, the Council will inform the requester of this.

- 5.3 The requester is entitled to say how they wish the information to be communicated to them. This may be by letter, email, in the form of a summary of the information or by inspection at the Council's offices. Where an inspection of documents is required, this will be arranged with the Parish Clerk at a mutually convenient date and time.
- 5.4 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 by the Parish Clerk before the request is processed. The Council's Publication Scheme has full details of charges for the provision of hard copies of documents.
- 5.5 The Parish Clerk may waive these charges where it is felt the information sought would be of particular assistance to the understanding of an issue of local importance.

6. Appeal of a response

- 6.1 If the requester is unhappy with the outcome of their request; usually where a request has been refused or they do not feel the request has been properly handled, they should first attempt to resolve this directly with the Parish Clerk.
- 6.2 If it cannot be resolved in discussion with the Parish Clerk then an appeal should be submitted to the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

7. Recording

- 7.1 All requests under the Freedom of Information Act will be recorded on a central log.
- 7.2 The Parish Clerk will report any requests received as part of the Clerk's report to each Parish Council meeting.

Information available from Peasmarsh Parish Council under the Model Publication Scheme

Please address all enquiries to the Parish Clerk, contact details:

Mrs A Head, Clerk to Peasmarsh Council, 15 Brickfields, Main Street, Peasmarsh, East Sussex TN 31 6SS. Tel. no. 07951 668713, e-mail peasmarshpc@outlook.com

Requests for hard copies will be charged as follows:

Schedule of Charges: On receipt of request for hard copies of information the clerk will notify cost to the applicant based on the number of pages and the following per page charges unless otherwise specified.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying @ 20p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage + 50p per envelope	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Local Action Plan and any subsequent updates	Pages copied and charged as stated plus postage and envelope £3.50	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class

How the information can be obtained

Hard copy or website www.peasmarsh.org.uk and **additionally as specified**

Class 1 - 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	Also available on the parish notice board
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Also available on the parish notice board
Location of main Council office	Clerk's address between the hours of 9am & 5pm, Monday to Friday
Location of Council meeting place	Peasmarsh Memorial Hall
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)	Current and previous financial year as a minimum
Annual return form and report by auditor	
Finalised budget	
Precept	
Borrowing Approval letter	Not applicable
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	
Grants given and received	
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	
Members' allowances and expenses	Not applicable

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	
Local Action Plan and subsequent up-dates	
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)	Current year also on parish notice boards
Agendas of the above meetings	Current agenda also displayed on parish notice board
Minutes of the above meetings	NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.
Responses to consultation papers	
Responses to planning applications	
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)	Current information only
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 when applicable Code of Conduct Policy statements	
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	
Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only	NB some information may only be available by inspection
Assets Register	
Register of members' interests Register of gifts and hospitality	Also available at Rother District Council, Town Hall
Class 7 – The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance & newsletters produced for the public & businesses)	Current information only NB some information may only be available by inspection
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	
Seating, litter bins, dog-waste bins	
Bus shelters	
Allotments	
Memorial Hall	

Approved by Peasmarsh Parish Council on 2nd April 2025 - to be reviewed every 3 years.