

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Adopted by Full Council on 14 March 2017

Last Reviewed 12 March 2024

Introduction

Dalston Parish Council have adopted the Model Publication Scheme. This scheme will enable members of the public to view and access information held by the Parish Council.

Obtaining Information and Information held

There are three ways to obtain the information:

- Inspect Documents held by the Clerk

Please contact the Clerk in writing either by e mail at clerk@dalston.org.uk or letter at address below. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment.

- Individual Written Request

If the information is not included in the publication scheme outlined below you may send a written request to: -

**The Parish Clerk, at Forge Green Office, Riverside, Dalston,
Carlisle CA5 7QG**

Your request must include your name, address for correspondence, and a description of the information you require.

- Visit the Parish Council Website www.dalston.org.uk

Council's Response to a Written Request

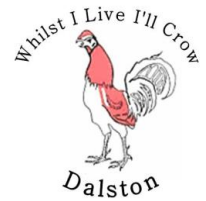
Within 20 working days of receipt of your written request the Council will:

- confirm to you whether or not it holds the information
- advise you if a fee will be charged
- provide you with the information (after any relevant fee has been paid) unless an exemption applies (see 'Exemptions' paragraph below)

Fees

The Act only allows the Council to charge for answering Freedom of Information requests in the following circumstances

1. Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage; and
2. When estimated staff costs involved in locating and or compiling the information exceed £450. Under these circumstances, the Council can refuse the request on the grounds of cost, or charge the applicant £25 per hour, plus disbursements for the estimated work.



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY Continued

For the majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant within a 12 month period, it is expected that the charge for locating and compiling information will be less than £450 and therefore, except for disbursement costs, no reimbursement can be sought. However, where costs are estimated to exceed £450 (based on an hourly charge-out rate of £25), the Council can decide to:

- refuse the request; or
- comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the regulations; or
- comply with the request free of charge.

If the estimated cost of a request is more than £450, and it is decided to release the information and make a charge for the information then:

- A fee notice will be sent to the applicant requesting the appropriate fee.
- The request will not be answered until the fee has been received.
- If the actual cost of completing the request is more than the estimate then the Council will incur the additional cost.
- Where the cost is less than the estimated cost then the difference will be refunded to the applicant.

For disbursements costs, it is proposed that the Council will charge 20p per sheet for photocopying and printing documents, and recover the actual cost of postage or any other transmission costs from the applicant.

Exemptions

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 created a general right of access to information, it also set out information that the Council does not have to make available for specific reasons, called exemptions. This is information that, if published, might prejudice the health, safety or security of the Council, its staff, systems, services or property or breached an individual's Data Protection Rights. If information is requested but is covered by an exemption the Clerk to the Council will tell the applicant in writing why the Council has refused the request and quote the relevant exemptions.

Further Help

If you need help in accessing information from the Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Parish Clerk (address as before).

You will also find more detailed guidance on the website of the Information Commissioner. www.ico.gov.uk

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Council then you should put your complaint in writing to the Clerk at the address above. If you are still dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

This policy will be revised, added to or modified when required and reviewed annually.

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY Continued

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying 20p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee	As identified in the aforementioned policy	In accordance with the relevant legislation