

## **Shaugh Prior Parish Council**

### **Freedom of Information Policy**

Shaugh Prior Parish Council (SPPC) has a commitment to openness and transparency and will make relevant information available wherever possible to individuals who request it, subject to safeguarding the privacy of individuals and to legitimate considerations of national security, law enforcement and commercial interests where relevant.

#### **1. The Freedom of Information Act 2000**

The Freedom of Information Act, which came into force on 1 January 2005, gives everyone a statutory right of access to information held by bodies such as Parish Councils.

#### **2. Publication Scheme**

SPPC has a publication scheme based on that issued by the Information Commissioners Office. This is available on the Council's website.

#### **3. Website**

A significant amount of the information for SPPC (including financial payments) can be accessed on our website – [www.shaughpriorparish.gov.uk](http://www.shaughpriorparish.gov.uk).

#### **4. Requesting Information**

Individuals or organisations may make a written request for information which they believe SPPC holds. To request information under the provisions of the Act, and to help SPPC in identifying the precise information you require, please email [scott.smy@shaughpriorparish.gov.uk](mailto:scott.smy@shaughpriorparish.gov.uk) or write to the Parish Clerk at 57 Priory Close, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9JG. As required by the Act, the following will need to be included with the request:

- Name of person requesting the information;
- Postal Address or email of the person requesting the information;
- A clear description of the information being requested;
- A preference of how the information is to be communicated e.g. hard copy, electronic or the opportunity to inspect a record containing the information. SPPC will try to provide the information in the preferred media as far as is reasonably practical, or will notify the person requesting the information if SPPC cannot do so.

#### **5. Responding to Requests**

SPPC will inform the person requesting the information in writing if SPPC holds the information requested and if so will provide the information no later than 20 working days after receipt of the request.

## **6. Information Exempt from the Act**

The Freedom of Information Act does identify a number of categories of information which SPPC is not required to disclose under the Act. In this case SPPC will write to the person requesting the information stating the exemption which provides the basis for refusal within the Act. SPPC will communicate this within 20 working days.

## **7. Charges**

There is no 'flat rate' fee to receive information under the Freedom of Information Act and in many cases SPPC will provide the information free of charge. However, if the information requested is not readily available in the media in which it is requested, SPPC may charge a fee based on the costs associated with providing the information e.g. photocopying and postage.

## **8. Refusal of Requests**

The Freedom of Information Act does permit SPPC to refuse a request if SPPC estimates that it will cost in excess of the appropriate limit of 10 hrs work.

## **9. Freedom of Information Fees Notice**

If a fee is required, SPPC will write advising of the fee required within 20 working days of receipt of the request. This is known as a 'Fees Notice'. When a Fees Notice has been issued, the 20 working day limit for responding stops and will start again when SPPC receives payment. If SPPC does not receive the fee within three months SPPC is not obliged to comply with the request.

## **10. Complaints**

If persons requesting information are dissatisfied with the way SPPC has responded to a request for information, please write to the Parish Clerk, 57 Priory Close, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9JG.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) is responsible for enforcing the operation of the Act, and you may raise issues with this office at any time. More information can be found on the ICO website or by writing to the Information Commissioners Officer, Whycliffe House, Water Lane, Wimslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

**Adopted by Shaugh Prior Parish Council – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Minute Ref – 27/24**