



MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

1. Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000

- 1.1 As a local authority, Councils are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which gives people the right to access information held by or on behalf of public authorities.
- 1.2 A person can make a request to the Council to have access to all recorded information held by it. This might be in the form of documents, emails, notes, audiotapes or letters and the information does not necessarily need to be about the person who requests the information from the Council.
- 1.3 A person can make a request to the Council in writing and in this request the person must state their name and address and what information they want from the Council. If the information which the person requests is already available in the Council's published documentation, then there is no need for the person to request this in writing.
- 1.4 If a formal FOI request is made, then the Council has up to 20 working days from the day after *the* date of the request to decide whether the law allows the requester to have the information.
- 1.5 If the Council can provide the information, then the Information Commissioner suggests that as much information as possible should be given free of charge and any charge, if required, should be reasonable. If the information which has been requested from the Council identifies other people, it cannot be disclosed and neither can information which may compromise national security.
- 1.6 The Council's current limit to complying with such requests is £450, and in estimating the cost of compliance time is charged at £25 per hour, giving a limit of 18 hours to gather the information.

2. Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

- 2.1 The Freedom of Information Act requires every public authority to have a publication scheme, approved by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and to publish information covered by the scheme.
- 2.2 The scheme must set out the Council's commitment to make certain classes of information routinely available, such as policies and procedures, minutes of meetings, annual reports and financial information.
- 2.3 The Town Council's Model Publication Scheme is attached to this policy