



1. Purpose

This Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy outlines Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council's commitment to transparency, accountability, and compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members of the public have access to information held by the parish council in a clear, timely, and structured manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all records and information held by Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council, whether in physical or digital format, including information created, received, or maintained by the council. It is applicable to all council members, employees, volunteers, and any contractors working on behalf of the council.

3. Right of Access

Under the FOIA, the public has the right to request access to recorded information held by the council. This policy provides guidelines on how such requests can be made, how they will be handled, and any circumstances where access may be restricted.

4. Publication Scheme

Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council will maintain a Publication Scheme, as required by the FOIA. The scheme will specify:

- Classes of information that the Council publishes or intends to publish;
- The format in which this information is available (e.g., website, hard copy);
- Any fees applicable for providing certain information.

The Publication Scheme will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it remains accurate and up-to-date.

5. Making an FOI Request

How to Submit:

Requests for information must be made in writing (including email) and should clearly state the information required. Verbal requests are not considered under FOIA but may be addressed at the council's discretion.

Contact Information:

Requests should be sent to the Parish Clerk at clerk.brpc@gmail.com or Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Hall, Ravenhill Park, Main Road, Brereton, Staffs WS15 1DU

Response Time:

The Council will respond to FOI requests within 20 working days from the date of receipt. If additional time is needed to retrieve information or clarify a request, the requester will be informed within the 20-day period.

6. Exemptions

Certain types of information may be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. These exemptions include but are not limited to:

- Personal data protected under the Data Protection Act (DPA);
- Information that is commercially sensitive or confidential;
- Information related to national security, public safety, or law enforcement.

When an exemption applies, the council will inform the requester of the reason for withholding information.

7. Fees and Charges

While most information is provided free of charge, the council reserves the right to charge for:

- Printing or photocopying costs;
- Postage or delivery costs;
- Requests that require a significant amount of time or resources to fulfil.

Any fees will be communicated to the requester prior to processing the request.

8. Handling and Processing of Requests

The Parish Clerk is responsible for receiving, logging, and processing all FOI requests. Requests will be handled fairly and consistently, following FOIA guidelines. Internal support or advice may be sought when required.

9. Review and Appeals

If a requester is dissatisfied with the response or handling of their request, they have the right to request an internal review. Appeals should be submitted in writing to the Parish Clerk within 30 days of receiving the initial response. The council will review the matter and provide a response within 20 working days.

If the requester remains dissatisfied after the internal review, they may contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for further assistance.

10. Data Protection Considerations

All information requests will be handled in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) where personal data is involved. The council will ensure that any disclosure of information respects the privacy and data protection rights of individuals.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure compliance with legal standards and best practices. Amendments will be approved by the Parish Council and communicated to the public as required.