

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Publication and document

Retention Scheme



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The Freedom of Information Act is intended to encourage local councils to publish more information proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness and transparency. All local authorities are required to have a publication scheme and to list the information it produces (Classes of Information). You may request (generally by writing to the Clerk) a copy of documents published by the parish council. If the parish council does not publish what you are seeking help will be given, where possible, to locate the document. Details of the Freedom of Information publication scheme and Classes of Information will be available on the parish council's website and from the parish office. Notices advertising the publication scheme will regularly be displayed on the community noticeboards in the parish.

Capel Parish Council endeavours to be open and accountable and is happy to make the documents detailed in the following list available. Photocopies of documents requested under this scheme will be forwarded within 20 working days.

If a request for information is refused a reason or explanation must be supplied. Appeals against any refusal can be made using the parish council's existing complaints procedure. Details of the complaints procedure is explained on the parish council's website or in the leaflet "Complaints Procedure" which is available from the parish office. If the applicant is not satisfied with that response there is a procedure to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Further information on the procedures and the scheme can be found at www.ico.gov.uk.

It is not the intention of the parish council to charge for copies of this scheme or for information requested. However it has reserved the right to do so. Charging (for the cost of photocopying and postage and packaging) will be at the discretion of the Clerk and the Chairman of the parish council. When dealing with issues such as charging or vexatious requests the parish council will use the guidance published by the Information Commissioners Officer to reach a decision.

Further information or copies of particular documents can be requested from or consulted at the parish office, the opening hours of which are generally 9.30 – 12.30 Monday and Thursday. Arrangements can be made to open the parish office outside of these hours. In the spirit of openness and accountability the parish council allows residents to address members at its public meetings. Details can be obtained from the parish council website or office.

The Clerk to the Council will be responsible for operating the scheme on a day to day basis; in the absence of the Clerk the Responsible Financial Officer will be responsible.

The parish council has an adopted Record Management Policy and Procedure details of which are included in this document.

Classes of Information

- Identifies documents that are published on the council's website.
- In the case of lists of documents under one bullet point not all the documents may be available from the website so please contact the parish office.

Who are we and what we do.

- Minutes of council, committee and sub-committee meetings – limited to the last two years
- Councils' Annual Report to Parish Meeting.
- Agendas and supporting papers for council, committee and sub-committee.
- Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review and boundary review of the council area.
- Responses to planning applications.
- Reports and responses by council to consultation papers.
- Information related to work by the parish council and parish office relating to local issues (e.g. highway problems).

What we spend and how we spend it.

- Annual return form.
- Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external).
- Budget details.
- Income and Expenditure records, Bank Statements for all accounts.
- Precept request.
- VAT records.
- Terms and conditions of employment*
- Job descriptions. * Exclusions – 'personal records' i.e. appraisals, employee specific salary details, disciplinary records, sickness records and the like by virtue of being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

What our priorities are and how we are doing.

How we make decisions.

- Standing Orders
- Terms of Reference for Committees.
- Financial Regulations.
- Complaints handling procedure
- Community Engagement Strategy

Our policies and procedures.

- Policies, protocols and procedures relating to the effective management of the parish office and the running of the parish council including:
- Equal Opportunities Statement; Compassionate leave; Training Strategy.

- Protocol for attending parish council and committee meetings; Parish Councillor guidance notes for site visits/ lobbying/Predetermination etc.; Meetings – Protocol for attending; Draft minutes publication on website policy; Absences- Guidance notes for acceptable reasons.
- Freedom of Information; Records Management Policy and Procedure.
- Health and Safety Policy; Risk Assessments.
- Disciplinary Procedure; Grievance Procedure.
- Grants Procedure and Policy; Investments approved Policy; Petty Cash; Payment of bills by Direct Debit and Standing Orders policy; Allowances and subsistence;
- Grounds Maintenance Contract; Use of Recreation Ground; Sale of Public Land, Purchase of land
- Pre Planning Application discussions; Traffic management during building work.
- Setting Policy Procedure; Replacement Procedures for projects not managed by parish office.

List and Registers.

- Members Register of Pecuniary Interests.
- Assets and Inventory lists.
- Copies of planning consultations, Development and Structure Plans, Rights of Way/Footway maps all of which are available from the local planning and/or highway authority respectively.

Document retention periods.

General Correspondence and implementation of the policy.

An annual review of all documentation will take place and documents will then be destroyed or passed to archives as indicated by the document retention periods.

General written (paper) correspondence will be destroyed 12 months after the last correspondence or closure of the issue. General e-mail correspondence will be kept for 6 months or printed off and treated as paper correspondence. It is recognised that common sense must be used and it is acknowledged that there will be occasions when documentation or correspondence is kept or a précis is made for future reference. Any such retention will only be for the purpose of historical recording or for the effective and efficient administration.

The parish Clerk, as identified, in the Record Management Policy will therefore give guidance for good records, management practice and will promote compliance with this policy.

Who we are and what we do

Basic File description	Retention period
Minutes of council, committee and sub-committee meetings	
signed copy Permanent.	Send to archives
Draft minutes	3 months after minutes are signed – shred
Members copies	Operational use
Agenda	Permanent, send to archives
Members declaration of acceptance of office	Permanent, send to archives
Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the council area.	6 months after being replaced by next review. Shred
Information relating to the last boundary review of the council area.	6 months after being replaced by next review. Shred
Responses to planning application	Date of planning permission granted or refused + 3 yrs. Shred
Grounds Maintenance Schedule	Until superseded + 12 months
Reports and responses to by council to consultation papers	2 years

What we spend and how we spend it

Basic file description	<u>Retention period</u>
Annual Return	Current year + 6 years. Archive
Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external)	Current year + 6 years. Archive
Budget details	Current year + 6 years. Shred
Income and Expenditure records, Bank Statements from all accounts	Current year + 6 years. Shred
Precept request	Current year + 6 years. Shred
VAT records	Current year + 6 years
Allowances and subsistence for parish councillors.	6 months after being replaced by next review
Terms and conditions of employment.	Until replaced by new terms and condition
Job descriptions	Until replaced by new JD

How we make decisions

Basic file description	Retention period
Standing Orders	Until superseded plus 12 months
Terms of reference for committees	Lifetime of committee plus six months
Financial Regulations	Until superseded plus 12 months

Our policies and procedures

Basic file description	Retention period
Policies and procedures unless specifically identified	Until superseded
Equal Opportunities Statement	Until superseded plus 12 months
Risk Assessments	Current year + 6 years
Fees and charges applied by the Council	Current year + 6 years
Insurance policies	Current year +21 years

Lists and Registers

Basic file Description	Retention period
Members Registers of Interest	On Resignation