

LOPPINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DO YOU KNOW HOW THE COUNCIL OPERATES?

Do you want to know more?

Councils are required to operate in an open manner wherever possible. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 increases public access to information which the Council holds.

The Parish Council has a duty to make certain information available for inspection and the purpose of this leaflet is to let everyone know what that information is. The information is divided into various classes to make it easier for those looking for information to find it.

1. Council Internal Practice and Procedure

- Minutes of council meetings - limited to the last 2 years.
- Procedural Standing Orders.
- Council's Annual Report to Parish Meeting.
- Code of Conduct for handling complaints.

2. Code of Conduct

- Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- Members Register of Interests
- Register of Members Interests Book

3. Periodic Electoral Review

This is information concerning changes to the electoral arrangements for parish, town and community councils. It includes recommendations for the creation of new wards, the amendment of existing wards, proposals for the names of new wards and alterations to the number of councillors to be elected to the council.

- Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the council area.
- Information relating to the last boundary review of the council area.

4. Employment Practice and Procedure

- Terms and Conditions of employment.
- Job descriptions

Exclusions - 'personal records' ie: appraisals, employee specific salary details, disciplinary records, sickness records and the like by virtue of being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

5. Planning Documents

- Responses to planning applications.
- The Parish Plan.

Exclusions - Copies of planning consultations, the Development Plan, Structure Plan, Local

Plan and Rights of Way/Footpath maps all of which are available from the local planning and/or highway authority respectively.

6. Audit and Accounts

- Annual return form - limited to the last financial year.
- Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external) - limited to the last financial year.
- Receipt/Payment books, Receipt books of all kinds, Bank Statements from all accounts - limited to the last financial year.
- Precept request - limited to the last financial year.
- VAT records - limited to the last financial year.
- Financial Standing Orders and Regulations.
- Asset and Liabilities Register - this will include details of commons/village greens owned by the council including management schemes for commons as well as village halls and recreation grounds and risk assessments.

Exclusions - all commercially sensitive information eg: quotations and tenders, loan documentation and insurance policies. With regard to quotations and tenders, this information is treated as confidential to ensure that the whole tender process is fair ie: if tender information is released to a third party prior to the end of the tender period those who initially submitted tenders could be undercut and/or unfairly disadvantaged.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

- *You may inspect any of the above documents and make a longhand copy at a time and a place which is convenient to The Parish Clerk.*
- *You may **NOT** remove the documents from the place of business of the council.*
- *You may ask The Clerk to for help to interpret the documents but you cannot ask for background information or elaboration of any matters contained in the documents.*
- *You may ask the Parish Council to supply a photocopy of a specified document. You will be asked to bear the cost of photocopying. (Currently 5p per A4 sheet and 10p per A3 sheet).*

HOW DO I GO ABOUT INSPECTING A DOCUMENT?

- *You must apply in writing to The Clerk to The Council specifying the documents you wish to inspect. (Telephone requests are not permitted).*
- *The Clerk must offer you the opportunity to inspect the document/s you have specified within 20 working days of the receipt of your request.*
- *If you feel precluded from exercising your rights of inspection by virtue of having to deal with The Clerk, arrangements can be made for this to be done at a premises other than the council's place of business in the presence of a Parish Councillor.*