

Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy

**1. Introduction**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“the Regulations”) provide individuals and organisations with the right to request information held by public authorities.

We are fully committed to the provisions of the Act and the Regulations, and support their underlying

principles of openness and transparency.

**2. Purpose**

This policy aims to provide a framework to comply with these provisions, uphold their principles and meet our obligations under these laws.

In particular we want to ensure that:

• We make a significant amount of information about the Parish Council available to the public as a matter of course through our publication scheme

• We make other information readily available on request and deal with requests in a timely manner and in accordance with the provisions of the Act

**3. Publication Scheme**

We have adopted the model publication scheme prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner.

The publication scheme sets out:

• The types of information we make available to the public as a matter of course

• How we make the information available

• Whether or not a fee must be paid for the information

The scheme will be reviewed and updated as necessary on a regular basis, taking into account any revised guidance.

**4. Requests for Information**

Any recorded information that we hold that is not already available to the public through our publication scheme can be requested. Requests must be made in writing, and we must respond to them within 20 working days.

Anyone who submits a written request has the right to:

• Be told whether the information is held

• Receive a copy of the information that is held, subject to exemptions

• Request an internal review if they are unhappy with our response

• Ask the Information Commissioner’s Office to investigate if still unhappy following the internal review.

A request for information must be directed to the Parish Clerk and it does not have to mention the Act to be a valid request. Contact details for the Parish Clerk are available on Northumberland County

Council’s website: [www.northumberland.gov.uk an](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/)d on the Parish Council website [www.ridingmill.org.uk](http://www.ridingmill.org.uk)

**5. Charges and Fees**

We will publish any fees that might be charged for information we make available through our publication scheme. The charging tariff includes the recovery of costs for staff time.

We do not have to comply with requests if the cost of responding would exceed the appropriate limit (as specified in the Fees Regulations). We will offer advice and assistance wherever possible in these instances to help requesters to narrow their requests down.

We will charge for reasonable printing, photocopying and postage costs involved in responding to requests as set out in the Parish Council’s Publication Scheme.

**6. Authority and Review**

This policy was approved at a meeting of Council on 14 September 2015 and is effective as of that date. The policy will be reviewed periodically.

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| Policy Prepared | August 2015 |
| Policy Adopted | 14 September 2015 |
| Policy review | September 2018 |