Freedom of Information Procedure

Salt and Enson Parish Council

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how Salt and Enson Parish Council (the Council) complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). It ensures requests are handled lawfully, consistently, and transparently.

This procedure should be read alongside the Council's:

- Standing Orders
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Retention Policy
- Publication Scheme

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all recorded information held by the Council, regardless of format, including:

- Emails and correspondence
- Minutes and agendas
- Financial records
- Policies and reports
- Audio or visual recordings

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Clerk to the Council

- Acts as the Council's FOI Officer
- Logs and manages all requests
- Coordinates responses
- Ensures deadlines are met

Councillors and Staff

- Assist in locating requested information promptly
- Forward any FOI requests received to the Clerk immediately

Council (Corporate Body)

- Ensures compliance with legislation
- Reviews and approves policies

4. Receiving Requests

Requests must:

- Be in writing (email, letter, or social media message)
- Include the requester's name and address for correspondence

- Clearly describe the information requested

Requests should be sent to:
Clerk to Salt and Enson Parish Council
PO Bos 8033, Rugeley, Staffordshire. WS15 9GW
clerk@saltandensonparishcouncil.co.uk
07388 326259

5. Logging and Acknowledgement

- All requests will be logged in the FOI Register
- Acknowledgement will be sent within **3 working days**

Template – Acknowledgement
Thank you for your request for information received on [date].
We will respond no later than 20 working days from receipt, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6. Time Limits

- Standard response time: **20 working days**
- If clarification is required, the deadline is paused until clarification is received
- EIR requests may be extended to 40 working days if complex

7. Handling Requests
The Clerk will:

1. Clarify the request if needed
2. Identify information held
3. Consider exemptions
4. Prepare the response

Information will be:

- Provided in the requested format where practicable
- Supplied electronically where possible

If information is already published, the applicant will be directed to it.

8. Exemptions and Refusals
Requests may be refused where:

- An FOIA exemption applies
- The request is vexatious or repeated
- The cost exceeds the statutory limit (£450 / 18 hours)

Common Exemptions

- Personal data (Section 40)

- Confidential information (Section 41)
- Commercial interests (Section 43)

Template – Refusal Notice
We regret that we are unable to provide the information requested.
This is because [exemption] applies under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
You have the right to request an internal review.

9. Fees and Charges
The Council may charge for:
- Printing and photocopying
- Postage

If fees apply:
- The applicant will be notified in advance
- The request will be paused until payment is received

10. Internal Review
Applicants may request an internal review within **40 working days**.
- Reviews will be conducted by a different officer or the Council
- Response within **20 working days** (up to 40 if complex)

Template – Review Response
We have completed our internal review and confirm that [decision outcome].
If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

11. Complaints
If dissatisfied, applicants may contact:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk

12. Publication Scheme
The Council adopts the ICO Model Publication Scheme and proactively publishes information in the following classes:
- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it

- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- Services we offer

The scheme is available on the Council's website.

13. Records Management

The Council will:

- Maintain an up-to-date records retention schedule
- Store records securely
- Dispose of records appropriately

Good records management supports FOI compliance.

14. Monitoring and Review

- This procedure will be reviewed annually
- The FOI Register will be monitored for trends and compliance
- Training will be provided where necessary

15. FOI Request Workflow (Summary)

1. Request received → logged
2. Acknowledged within 3 days
3. Information gathered
4. Exemptions considered
5. Response issued within 20 days
6. Internal review (if requested)

Adopted by Salt and Enson Parish Council on: 2nd September 2026
Next Review Date: May 2027