



# **Freedom of Information Policy 2021**

East Cowes Town Council is committed to complying with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to publishing or making available information held by it in accordance with the Act.

This policy applies to all recorded information the Town Council holds, regardless of how and when it was created or received. It applies regardless of the media the information is stored in, whether the information is paper based or held electronically.

### **Making a Freedom of Information Request**

Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act must be:

- In writing (this includes requests by email)
- Contain your name and a correspondence address (or email address)
- Clearly describe the information requested

Once a request is received, the Town Council has 20 working days to:

- Confirm whether we hold the information requested
- Advise whether you need to pay a fee for the information
- Advise who holds the information if we do not have it

All requests will be recorded by the Town Council and will be handled in accordance with The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Dealing with Requests**

East Cowes Town Council will respond to requests within 20 working days. Each request will be considered on its own merits.

East Cowes Town Council Publication Scheme lists information that is readily available and the cost of providing it. Payment may be requested prior to the information being provided. Any information not listed may be requested but may not be available for reasons beyond the Town Councils control.

The exemptions from the general rights of access in Part II of the Act are as follows:

- Information accessible to applicant by other means
- Information intended for future publication
- Research
- Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters
- National security
- Defence
- International relations
- Relations within the United Kingdom
- The economy
- Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities

- Law enforcement
- Court records, etc
- Audit functions
- Parliamentary privilege
- Formulation of government policy, etc
- Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs
- Communications with Her Majesty, etc and honours
- Health and safety
- Environmental information
- Personal information
- Information provided in confidence
- Legal professional privilege
- Commercial interests
- Prohibitions on disclosure

The Town Council will claim exemptions as appropriate whilst maintaining a commitment to openness, scrutiny and the public interest and will inform the FOI applicant when exemptions have been applied.

Applicants who are not satisfied with the information provided have the right to complain to the Town Council. If the issue is still not resolved satisfactorily, then they can take their complaint to the Information Commissioner <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

## **Responsibilities**

The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that any request for information is dealt with under the Act and in compliance with this policy.

To make a request, please apply in writing to:

The Clerk  
East Cowes Town Council  
Town Hall  
York Avenue  
East Cowes  
Isle of Wight  
PO33 6RU

Or by email to [clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk)