

WEST MOORS TOWN COUNCIL



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Adopted by the Council January 2009
Reviewed and Updated 05.01.2026

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Information Commissioner's Office the purpose of this Policy is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by West Moors Town Council for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

The Council is committed to complying with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and associated legislation. This provides a general entitlement to information that the Council holds to any person subject to exemptions and conditions laid down by law.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all recorded information the Council holds regardless of how it was created or received. It applies regardless of the media the information is stored in, whether the information may be on paper, held electronically or as an audio recording. The Act is fully retrospective. Dealing with requests, the Town Council offers advice and assistance to anybody who wishes to make a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. The Council is committed to dealing with requests within the statutory timescales of no more than 20 working days. This can be extended in specific circumstances on legal advice. However, the Council is committed to providing a prompt service.

The 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. Where appropriate, requests in writing will be treated as Freedom of Information requests. There is no need for requests to indicate they are made under the Act. The Council reserves the right to refuse requests where the cost of supply of the information would exceed the statutory maximum (see section 12 of the Act.).

3. ADOPTING AND MAINTAINING PUBLICATION SCHEMES

The Council has adopted an Information Publication Scheme (attached at Appendix A) and is committed to updating and maintaining it to keep it current and relevant. The Publication Scheme contains many of the documents, policies, plans and guidance which are usually asked for and much more. Material contained within the publication scheme, and a copy of the scheme itself, is readily available. Where charges are applied these are stated in the scheme. The scheme can also be accessed via the website. The Town Clerk will give advice and assistance on how to use the scheme as appropriate. **This scheme is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.**

4. 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. The Town Clerk is also responsible for good information handling practice and implementing records management policies and procedures as appropriate. The Council will carefully consider its responsibilities under GDPR before releasing any personal data about living individuals, including current and former officers, current and former Council Members, and users of the Council's services.

Contact Details:

West Moors Town Council
4 Park Way
West Moors
BH22 0HL
Tel: 01202 861044
Email: office@westmoors-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.westmoors-tc.gov.uk

Further advice and information, including a full list of exemptions and advice on the public interest test, is available from the Information Commissioner's Office www ICO org uk.

5. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM WEST MOORS TOWN COUNCIL

	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Who we are and what we do		
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	West Moors Town Council-Contact Us	
Contact details for Town Clerk	West Moors Town Council-Contact Us	
List of Councillors	West Moors Town Council website-Council-Councillors	
Membership of Committees and Working Groups	West Moors Town Council website-Council	
WMTC Code of Conduct Order	West Moors Town Council Documents	
Agendas (last 2 years)	West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes	
Minutes of Council and Committees (last 2 years)	West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes	

Standing Orders	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Terms of Reference for Committees	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Council's Strategic Plan	West Moors Town Council – Council Documents	
Councillor Representation on outside bodies	West Moors Town Council-Council-Outside Bodies	
Staffing Structure	West Moors Town Council-Council-Organisation and Staff	
Exclusions – Confidential Agendas, Minutes and Reports.		
This is where the documents contain exempt information. Typically, information may be withheld if it is personal data and its disclosure would contravene the Data Protection Act or if the information relates to legal proceedings or advice, or if disclosure would prejudice the commercial interests of another person.		
What we spend and how we spend it		
Current and previous financial year as a minimum	West Moors Town Council-Finance	
Annual return form and report by auditor – internal and external	West Moors Town Council-Finance	
Capital and Revenue budgets	West Moors Town Council-Finance	
Precept request	West Moors Town Council-Finance	
VAT records	Held in Council office	
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Grants Criteria- Grants given and received are minuted in the Finance & Staffing Committee Minutes given and received	West Moors Town Council-Agendas and Minutes and West Moors Town Council-Council-Awards and Grants	
Service Level Agreements and Contracts	Held in Council office	
Members expenses - <i>Only mileage claims and Chair allowance</i>	West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes	
Borrowing Approval letter	Held in Council office	
Fees and charges applied by the Council	West Moors Town Council-Council-Community Assets-Cemetery And West Moors Town Council-Council-Community Assets-Fryer Field	

Receipt/Payment records,	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes-Finance</u>	
Purchase of goods/services £500 and over	<u>West Moors Town Council-Finance</u>	
Exclusions – All commercially sensitive information e.g. 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 i.e. 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 our priorities are and how we are doing		
Strategic Plan (2025)	<u>West Moors Town Council - Documents</u>	
Town Council Annual Report	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes</u>	
Risk Assessments	<u>West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents</u>	
Playground Inspections	Held in Council office	
Value for Money statement	<u>West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents</u>	
How we make decisions		
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings)	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes</u>	
Agendas of meetings	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes</u>	
Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes</u>	
Reports presented to council meetings - NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes</u>	
Responses to Consultation papers	<u>West Moors Town Council-Agendas and Minutes</u> and <u>West Moors Town Council-NEWS</u>	
Responses to Planning Applications	<u>West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes-Planning</u>	

Byelaws	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Analysis of responses received to public consultations by the Council	West Moors Town Council-Council-Agendas and Minutes and West Moors Town Council-NEWS	

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.

Our Policies and procedures		
Procedural Standing Orders	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Committee/subcommittee terms of reference	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Code of Conduct	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Equality and Diversity policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Health and Safety policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Complaints Procedures	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Grievance Procedure	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Job Descriptions	Held in Council office	
Terms and Conditions of Employment	Held in Council office	
Data Protection Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Climate Emergency Action Plan	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Crime and Disorder Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Lone Working Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Training and Development Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Privacy Notice	West Moors Town Council-Home Page footer	
Retention Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Bench and Memorial Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Grants Policy Statement	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	

Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Social Media Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Risk Management Statement	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Policy and Protocol on Recording meetings	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Protocol on Member-Officers Relations	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Safety Inspection Records	Held in Council office	

Annual Investment Strategy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Discipline Procedure	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Casual Vacancies	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
CCTV Code of Practice	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Travellers Policy	West Moors Town Council – Council - Documents	
Lists and Registers		
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Held in Council office	
Asset Register	Held in Council office	
Disclosure Log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish/town councils)	Held in Council office	
Register of Members pecuniary interests	West Moors Town Council website-Council-Councillors	
Register of gifts and hospitality	Held in Council office	
Members' Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Held in Council office	
The Services we offer		
Allotments (Standard Tenancy Agreements)	Held in Council office	
Exclusion – Individual tenancy agreements and rent payment records under both privacy and data protection laws.		

Burial Grounds (Map/Fees/Regulations)	West Moors Town Council Cemetery-Genealogy Search Search WM cemetery records Hard copy map held in Council office	
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	West Moors Town Council - Council- Community Assets	
Public Conveniences	West Moors Town Council - Council- Community Assets	
Additional Information		
This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above		
Town Council Guide (every 4 years- next due 2025)	Held in Council office	
Town Council newsletters	West Moors Town Council Newsletters	
Facebook Posts	@WestMoorsTC	

Schedule of Charges			
Type of charge	Description	Basis of Charge	
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black and white)	Actual cost incurred by the Town Council	
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd Class	
Statutory fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation or fees permitted by other legislation	

Any charges made by West Moors Town Council for routinely published material must be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum. Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Written Requests

Information held by West Moors Town Council that is not published under this Scheme, can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as photocopying and a postage charge if you are unable to call into the office to collect them. If a

charge is to be made, the individual will be informed of the charge and why it is to be incurred prior to the information being provided.

Payment may be requested prior to release of the information. Charges may also be made for information provided under the scheme where it is legally authorised. Any subject access requests to information will be complied within one month. Your request will be refused or charged for if it is manifestly unfounded or excessive.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as required by organisation and legislation changes, but at a minimum of 3 to 4 years.