

Hawstead Parish Council

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Approved May 2026

Freedom of Information Policy

Hawstead Parish Council has adopted the ICO model publication scheme - see Hawstead PC publication scheme attached at the Appendix - which enables members of the public to view and access information held by the Parish Council.

Obtaining Information and Information held

There are three ways to obtain the information:

1. Hawstead Parish Council web site

The web site <https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/> holds the type of information which the Council routinely publishes in accordance with the ICO Model publication scheme e.g. minutes and agendas. The information you want may already be included in the publication scheme – so please check the documents on the website first.

2. Inspect Documents held by the Clerk

If you wish to view certain documents, you should contact the Clerk, either via the facility on the website or by telephone, or in writing. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment.

3. Individual Written Request

If the information is not included in the publication scheme or on the web site, you may send a written request to Hawstead Parish Council (address Brokesbourne, Stanningfield Road, Great Whelnetham IP30 0TY). Your request must include your name, address for correspondence, and a description of the information you require.

Council's Response to a Written Request

Within 20 working days of receipt of your written request the Council will:

- confirm to you whether or not it holds the information
- advise you if a fee will be charged
- provide you with the information (after any relevant fee has been paid) unless an exemption applies (see 'Exemptions' paragraph below).

Fees

The Act only allows the Council to charge for answering Freedom of Information requests in the following circumstances:

- Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage; plus

- The staff costs involved in locating and or compiling the information requested (but only where these are estimated to exceed £450 and the Council has **not** refused the request).

For the majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant within a 12 month period, it is expected that the charge for locating and compiling information will be less than £450 and therefore, except for disbursement costs, no reimbursement can be sought. However, where costs are estimated to exceed £450 (based on an hourly charge-out rate of £25), the Council can decide to (i) refuse the request; or (ii) comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the regulations; or (iii) comply with the request free of charge.

If the estimated cost of a request is more than £450, and it is decided to release the information and make a charge for the information then:

- A fee notice will be sent to the applicant requesting the appropriate fee.
- The request will not be answered until the fee has been received.
- If the actual cost of completing the request is more than the estimate then the Council will incur the additional cost.
- Where the cost is less than the estimated cost then the difference will be refunded to the applicant.

For disbursements costs, it is proposed that the Council will charge 10p per sheet for photocopying and printing documents, and recover the actual cost of postage or any other transmission costs from the applicant.

Exemptions

Some information may not be provided by the Council as there are 23 exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act, for example, personal data about individuals which is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, or commercially confidential information.

Further Help

If you need help in accessing information from the Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Parish Clerk.

You will also find more detailed guidance on the website of the Information Commissioner.

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Council then you should put your complaint in writing to the Clerk at the address above. If you are still dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office: Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF . Tel: 01625 545700

APPENDIX

Hawstead Parish Council - Publication Scheme

Information available from Hawstead Parish Council under the ICO model publication scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 – who we are and what we do		
Current information only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is on the Council Contact details for the Parish Clerk Contact details (in accordance with GDPR) for Council members 	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Location of Parish Council offices	There is no permanent office facility/ regular office hours. Meetings with the Parish Clerk can be arranged by contacting the Parish Clerk via email or telephone clerk@hawstead-pc.gov.uk Mob 07765 831803	See below
Staffing Structure	Clerk to the Council & Responsible Financial Officer (part time)	
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Current and previous financial year's accounts Annual Governance and Accountability Return Finalised budget (reported via minutes) Precept details (reported via minutes) Financial Regulations Grants received (reported via minutes) Grants given (reported via minutes) Members expenses (if any) List of contracts awarded and value of contract (reported via minutes)	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Class 3 What our priorities are and how we are doing		
The Council's activities are reported via minutes	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
Timetable of Parish Council meetings for	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/	See below

the current year Agendas of all meetings Minutes of all meetings (excluding information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting) Reports presented to meetings (excluding all information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting)	Available by hard copy from the Clerk	
Responses to consultations papers	On request to Parish Clerk	See below
Responses to planning applications	Included within the minutes or on the Local Planning Authority's website both of which can be accessed without charge	See below
Class 5 – our policies and procedures Standing Orders Financial Regulations Code of conduct	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Policies and GDPR privacy notice	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Class 6 – Lists and registers Asset register Register of Members interests Register of Gifts and Hospitality (as required)	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Disclosure Log (indicating the information -if any -that has been provided in response to requests (as required))	Available free on website https://hawstead-pc.gov.uk/ Available by hard copy from the Clerk	See below
Class 7 – the services we offer Provision and maintenance of assets listed on the Councils fixed asset register Provision and maintenance of allotments	Details available upon enquiry to Parish Clerk	See below

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES – where applicable

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ £1 per first sheet and 10p per subsequent sheet (black and white) or 15p per subsequent sheet (colour)	Actual cost (stationary/ ink plus admin time)
	Postage	Actual cost from time to time