

# Witham Town Council: Freedom of Information Policy

*A guide to the principles of Freedom of Information under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and how to submit FOI requests to the Council.*

## Policy Overview

This policy is managed in accordance with the Information Commissioners Office 'Freedom of Information Code of Practice' and sets out the rights and obligations of the Council in relation to the freedom of information.

### 1. Your rights

When making a request to the Council, you have a right to:

- Be informed whether the Council holds information meeting the description set out in your request, and:
- To have any information we hold relating to the request communicated to you, both electronic and paper.
- To receive advice and assistance from the Council
- To receive your request within 20 working days of having first raised it.

### 2. Description of requests and general information relating to requests.

- 2.1 Requests must be for recorded information. Requests concerning clarification on policy, comments or press enquiries on general Council business falls outside the scope of the FOI act.
- 2.2 FOI requests will usually be conducted free of charge by the Council, and charges only made where the request involves a substantial volume of information. Where a charge is to be made, a schedule of charges will be issued to the applicant with an explanation on how the charge has been calculated. Applicants reserve the right to complain about a charge raised through the Council's complaints procedure.
- 2.3 Where applicants request that information is to be relayed through a preferred method of communications (e.g. email) the Council will meet this request as far as is practically reasonable.
- 2.4 The Council reserves the right to ask for clarification from applicants, for example where an applicant has not provided their full name.
- 2.5 The Council reserves the right not to respond to 'vexatious' requests. The determination of such a request is conducted through guidance issued to public authorities from the Information Commissioners Office.
- 2.6 Many documents are already in the public domain on the Town Council website and may not require a FOI request. For more information, please refer to the Council's publication scheme which is on the Town Council's website.

### 3. Making Requests

- 3.1 Requests can be emailed to [townclerk@witham.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@witham.gov.uk) or alternatively raised in writing to:

Witham Town Council  
Town Hall  
61 Newland Street  
Witham  
Essex  
CM8 2FE

#### **4. Disputing Information Received**

4.1 Where applicants dispute the information received in a request, you may request an internal review be conducted

**Agreed:** Minute 58(d) of Policy & Resources Meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**Reviewed:** Policy & Resources Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Review Date:** March 2026

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