



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Date Ratified:	10 December 2024
Meeting:	Finance and General Purpose Committee
Next review date:	December 2027 (3 yearly review)
Supersedes:	Freedom of Information Policy Adopted January 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Thornbury Town Council is committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and accessibility in its operations. This policy outlines the Town Council's approach to handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and ensures compliance with its statutory obligations.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out the council's commitment to the FOIA.
- Define procedures for handling information requests.
- Provide a framework for proactive publication of information.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all recorded information held by Thornbury Town Council, regardless of format (paper, electronic, or other). It covers:

- Responsibilities of staff and elected members in ensuring compliance.
- Information routinely published by the council.
- Requests made under the FOIA.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Chief Executive:** Acts as the FOI officer, responsible for handling and responding to FOI requests.
- **Elected Members and Staff:** Must ensure that records are maintained and accessible and assist in responding to FOI requests as needed.
- **Town Council:** Reviews and updates this policy and ensures its adherence.

5. PUBLICATION SCHEME

Thornbury Town Council adopts the model publication scheme provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This scheme identifies the classes of information routinely made available by the council. The publication scheme is available on the Town Council's website www.thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk or upon request from the council office.

6. MAKING A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Requests for information must:

- Be in writing (including email).
- Include the requester's name and correspondence address.
- Clearly describe the information being sought.

Requests can be made by post **or** email:

Chief Executive
Thornbury Town Council
Town Hall
High Street
Thornbury
Bristol
BS35 2AR

info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk

7. RESPONSE TIMES

- The Town Council will log and acknowledge requests.
- FOI requests will be responded to within **20 working days** from receipt.
- If additional clarification is required, the response period will commence once the clarification is received.

8. EXEMPTIONS

Certain information may be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA and these are detailed in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Exemptions (Part II). Examples include:

- Personal data (protected under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR).
- Information subject to legal privilege.
- Confidentiality.

If an exemption applies, the council will provide the requester with an explanation for the refusal.

9. CHARGES

- The council reserves the right to charge for the cost of photocopying, printing, and postage where applicable.
- Fees will not exceed the limits set out in the FOIA and associated regulations.
- Requesters will be notified of any fees before the request is processed.

10. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

If a requester is dissatisfied with the council's response, they may:

1. Request an internal review by contacting the Chief Executive.
2. Escalate their complaint to the **Information Commissioner's Office** (ICO) if unsatisfied with the outcome of the internal review:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Helpline: 0303 123 1113