

Document Control

Organisation	Addingham Parish Council
Title	Dealing with Correspondence and FOI requests
Version	1
Creator	Sallie Lloyd – Clerk and Reviewed by the Council
Adopted	October 2018
Last review Date	
Owner	Clerk
Next Review date	tbc

ADDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Dealing with Correspondence from the Public including FOIs

All public authorities deal with correspondence from members of the public on a daily basis, and it is normally expected that most of it will be dealt with as a matter of routine administrative practice. Addingham Parish Council is committed to providing a professional, fair and efficient service to members of the public and correspondence will be handled in accordance with the following procedures:

- Correspondence – by post and emails – will generally be received by the Clerk.
- Most correspondence and queries will be answered promptly, and if a response cannot be provided within 2-5 days (if, for example, the query is complex or needs input from other sources), the query will be acknowledged and an explanation for the delay will be provided.
- At the discretion of the Clerk, correspondence will be handled on a routine basis or will be brought to the attention of the council.
- Correspondence of general interest to the council or notices which need to be brought to the attention of the council will be detailed on the Correspondence List which is circulated to councillors for each council meeting. Members may request copies of any items of correspondence so listed.
- Significant issues raised in correspondence will be listed on the agenda for council to consider and decide on, as necessary.
- Every effort will be made to respond to members of the public who correspond with the council on a frequent basis, but correspondence which makes unreasonable demands on the time and resources of the Clerk, involving repeated requests and prolonged email exchanges, will be logged and, at the discretion of the Clerk, will not be pursued unnecessarily. Such correspondence will be brought to the attention of the council by inclusion on the monthly Correspondence List.
- Freedom of Information requests will be handled by the Clerk in compliance with statutory requirements.
- The Clerk will notify the council of FOIs received by reference to them on the Correspondence List.
- Items of correspondence and FOIs will be reported specifically to council in cases where the volume, frequency or content of correspondence exchanges or FOIs appears to the Clerk to be excessive or where replying to them becomes unduly onerous in terms of officer time and expense.

- Where the Clerk reports such concerns to Council, an internal review of the correspondence log will be initiated, and the conclusions of this review, to be conducted by the Chairman and one other member, will be considered by Council at its next meeting.
- In such circumstances, Council may decide that the correspondence or queries are to be treated as vexatious, and will decide the action that may be taken in line with statutory guidance and the Council's Vexatious Policy.

These procedures have been drawn up with reference to the YLCA guide "Dealing with Members of the Public" and to the ICO published guidance on handling FOIs and vexatious requests for information. These procedures are to be read alongside the Council's Complaints Procedures and Vexatious Policy.