Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme. 2024

Classes of Information in the Scheme

1 - Who we are and what we do
2 - What we spend and how we spend it
3 - What our priorities are and how we are doing
4 - How we make decisions
5 - Our Policies and Procedures
6 - Lists and Registers
7 - Our Services

1 - Who we assert and what we do.
The Parish Council (PC) is a civil authority, the first tier of local government. It is part of the democratic framework of the UK to represent the village in the broader landscape of national governance. Although the PC looks after the village, it does not have direct control over all the issues. The PC works with and can advise both the District Council and the County Council on matters controlled by them. The officers are elected every four years by the members of the public entitles to vote by being domicile in the parish. Councillors are unpaid and are summoned to regular meetings. All councillors have responsibilities for various aspects of council work.

2 - What we spend and how we spend it.
The PC gets an annual income of £54,000 from the general council tax known as the Precept. Other sources of income are from various grants applied for, income from burials, parking places, events on the Recreation Ground, donations and interest from bank accounts, adding a further approximate £6,000 These are controlled by the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) and the Finance Committee (FinCom). The FinCom is made up of councillors, as is the RFO at present. The PC's expenditure covers many areas comprising of salaries for staff employed; admin that allows the PC to function; maintenance of the village; administrating Section Grants - S19 Recreational, S106 Projects, S137 Donations to organisations and S145 Public events. The S106 Grant has been supplemented this year by a contribution from housing developments in the village of £82.000. The PC also have several long term contracts for grass cutting, cemetery maintenance and litter clearance. They also have several annual contracts for weed control, RoSPA inspections of play equipment, defibrillator maintenance and tree maintenance.

3 - What our priorities are and how we are doing.
One of our prime priority is to listen to members of the public, their concerns and interests. The PC cannot always solve all the problems as many are out of the PC's control. When this is the case the PC will try to engage either with the District Council or the County Council to resolve the issues. The PC shares the responsibilities of its work between councillors with each one having defined area of work. Major responsibilities are in finance, planning, neighbourhood, and section grant evaluation.

Assessment of work is continual and often relies on expert professional guidance. Planning is one area where the PC has no final control and is an advisory portal for the District Council.

4 - How we make decisions

All proposals are made in the public eye. Proposals are generated by councillors in consultation with the public and their own perceived needs of the village. Proposals are brought to the council meetings where they are discussed and a resolution made. The public are invited to offer comments on agenda items prior to their discussion and afterwards about any other items of concern. Councillors who have a vested interest in a proposal declare their interest and refrain from voting on the issue. If the vote is equal for and against the chairman has the final say in their casting vote. As a background to the council's decision making it has a number of policy documents and provide the backbone to its work.

5 - Our policies and procedures

The council works within a prescribed set of criteria referred to as Standing Orders and Terms of Reference. Standing Orders both administrative and financial are set by government dictate. Standing orders prescribe how the council is to be run, how it manages information and how it reaches its resolutions. It also prescribes the order of its meeting and its conduct. Terms of Reference are self generated and state how each policy making team work.

6 - Lists and Registers

The council only keep information, that it is entitled to do so, so that contact can be maintained with correspondents and contacts with the council while that correspondence and contact is current. Permitted councillors can receive a copy of the electoral register for reference purposes. Once current communication is complete personal details are removed unless necessary for archival purposes for future contact.

7 - The service we offer

The council can offer advice on many parish matters including advice on applying for planning or concern over planning issues. How to raise issues with the district council or the county council. The PC cannot fix roads but they can advise as how to contact the county council who are responsible for them. All PC matters, agendas, minutes monthly finances, statements of accounts, policies and procedures can be found on the council website miltonunderwychwood-pc.gov.uk