



Audlem Parish Council Transparency Code Policy

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1. Policy Summary

Audlem Parish Council is committed to openness, accountability, and public engagement in line with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 (the Code). This policy outlines how the Council will publish required and recommended information to ensure residents can scrutinize its activities, decisions, and finances. It applies to all Council operations, including financial transactions, governance, and policies such as the CCTV Policy and Information & Data Protection Policy. Compliance with this policy ensures adherence to statutory obligations and promotes trust within the Audlem community.

2. Introduction

The Local Government Transparency Code 2015, issued under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, mandates parish councils with an annual turnover (income or expenditure) exceeding £25,000 to publish specific datasets. Smaller councils (turnover under £25,000) must comply with the Smaller

Authorities' Transparency Requirements 2015 but are encouraged to adopt the full Code voluntarily. This policy ensures Audlem Parish Council meets these requirements, providing accessible, timely, and accurate information to residents, businesses, and stakeholders.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all information that Audlem Parish Council is required or recommended to publish under the Code. It covers:

- Financial data (e.g., expenditure, contracts, grants).
- Governance documents (e.g., minutes, agendas, policies).
- Councillor and asset information.
- Operational policies, such as the CCTV Policy and Information & Data Protection Policy.

The policy applies to all Councillors, staff, and volunteers, with the Parish Clerk responsible for implementation and compliance.

4. Legal Framework

Audlem Parish Council's transparency obligations are governed by:

- Local Government Transparency Code 2015: Mandates publication of specific datasets for councils with turnover over £25,000.
- Smaller Authorities' Transparency Requirements 2015: Applies to councils with turnover under £25,000, requiring publication of expenditure over £100 and other key data.
- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA): Requires a Publication Scheme and access to information on request.
- Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014: Underpins financial transparency and audit requirements.
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018): Ensures personal data is protected when publishing information.
- Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014: Mandates public access to meeting records and officer decisions.

The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a data controller (Registration number: ZA105006]. Note: Included relevant legal frameworks and ICO registration for clarity, aligning with data protection queries.

5. Mandatory Information to be Published

Audlem Parish Council will publish the following information, as required by the Code (for turnover over £25,000) or Smaller Authorities' Requirements (if turnover is under £25,000):

- Annual Publications (by 1 July following the financial year-end, 31 March)
- Expenditure over £500 (or £100 for smaller councils): Details of each transaction, including date, purpose, amount, and VAT (if applicable).
- End-of-Year Accounts: Including the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), annual governance statement, internal audit report, and external auditor report (if applicable).
- Public Land and Building Assets: Descriptions, locations, and valuations of Council-owned assets (e.g., community buildings, land).
- Councillor Details: Names, roles, and responsibilities of all Councillors.
- Minutes, Agendas, and Papers: For all formal Council and committee meetings, excluding confidential items (e.g., personal data or commercially sensitive information).
- Location and Contact Details: Address and contact information for the Council

Quarterly Publications (within one month of quarter-end)

- Contracts and Tenders over £5,000: Invitations to tender, contract details, and awarded contracts (e.g., CCTV maintenance or service contracts).
- Grants Awarded: Details of financial assistance provided to external bodies, including recipient, amount, and purpose.

Note: If turnover is under £25,000, only expenditure over £100, AGAR, and meeting records are mandatory, but publishing contracts and grants is recommended.

6. Recommended Information

The Council will voluntarily publish additional information to enhance transparency, including:

- Policies and Procedures: E.g., CCTV Policy, Information & Data Protection Policy, Complaints Procedure, Financial Regulations, and Standing Orders.
- Publication Scheme: Detailing information available under the FOIA, including how to access it.
- Organisational Structure: Details of committees, staffing, and roles (if applicable).
- FOI Responses: A disclosure log of responses to Freedom of Information requests of public interest, excluding personal data

- Community Initiatives: Information on projects or initiatives to promote Audlem's economic and social well-being.
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7. Publication Requirements

- Online Access: All mandatory and recommended information will be published on the Council's website (www.audlempc.co.uk).
- Format: Data will be published in an accessible format (e.g., PDF, CSV, HTML) and machine-readable where possible.
- Timeliness: Annual data will be published by 1 July each year, and quarterly data within one month of the quarter's end (e.g., by 31 July for Q1).
- Retention: Information will remain available for at least three years, or longer if required by law (e.g., financial records for six years).
- Hard Copies: Available upon request from the Parish Clerk, with a reasonable fee for copying or postage if applicable.

Note: Specified website publication and retention periods to align with Code requirements.

8. Data Protection Considerations

The Council will ensure compliance with the UK GDPR and DPA 2018 when publishing information, particularly for:

- Personal Data: Excluded from public disclosure (e.g., SARs, employee data) unless required by law or anonymised (e.g., diversity monitoring data).
- CCTV Footage: Managed per the CCTV Policy, with SARs and disclosures handled confidentially and not included in public datasets.
- Councillor Registers of Interest: Published as required by the Localism Act 2011, with personal data redacted where necessary to comply with UK GDPR.

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be conducted for activities involving personal data (e.g., CCTV) to ensure compliance, as outlined in the Information & Data Protection Policy.

9. Disclosure Log

The Council will maintain a disclosure log on its website to publish responses to FOI requests of public interest (e.g., about expenditure, contracts, or CCTV usage), as recommended by the Code. The log will include:

- Date of request.

- Summary of the request.
- Response provided (excluding personal data).
- Any exemptions applied (e.g., Section 40 of FOIA for personal data).

Personal data from Subject Access Requests (SARs) will not be published, as per UK GDPR and DPA 2018. The disclosure log will be updated regularly and retained for at least three years. Note: Incorporated disclosure log from your SAR query, ensuring alignment with FOIA and data protection laws.

10. Responsibilities

The Parish Clerk is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the Transparency Code and this policy.
- Publishing required datasets on time and in the correct format.
- Maintaining the Publication Scheme and disclosure log.
- Handling FOI requests and SARs in line with the Information & Data Protection Policy.
- Conducting DPIAs for high-risk activities (e.g., CCTV).
- Training Councillors and staff on transparency obligations.

The Council will appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) if required, or the Parish Clerk will assume DPO responsibilities for data protection compliance. All publication decisions will be recorded in Council minutes for accountability.

Contact Details:

- Parish Clerk: parish@audlempc.co.uk
 - Address: 2 Bronte Drive, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 7FT
 - Phone: 07783 580406
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11. Complaints Procedure

Complaints about the Council's compliance with the Transparency Code, including access to published information or FOI responses, should be directed to the Parish Clerk at parish@audlempc.co.uk (parish@audlempc.co.uk). Complaints will be handled under:

- The Complaints Procedure for general issues (available on the website).
- The Information & Data Protection Policy for data-related concerns (e.g., SARs or CCTV disclosures), with a response within one month.

If unresolved, complainants may contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- Phone: 0303 123 1113
- Email: <https://ico.org.uk/concerns>
- Address: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Note: Clarified complaint handling to align with your CCTV Policy and SAR queries.

12. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or when significant legal or operational changes occur (e.g., updates to the Transparency Code or Data (Use and Access) Act 2025). The Parish Clerk will monitor compliance, report to the Council, and ensure all published data remains accurate and accessible. Non-compliance will be addressed through corrective actions and reported in Council minutes.