



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Date: 4 June 2025

Objective

Felsted Parish Council ('the Council') aims to ensure that personal information/data is treated lawfully and correctly.

The lawful and correct treatment of personal information is extremely important in maintaining the confidence of those with whom the Council deals and in achieving its objectives.

This policy applies to all staff, councillors and those undertaking business with or on behalf of the Council.

The Council fully endorses and adheres to the Data Protection principles set out below:-

DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

Personal Information shall be:

- Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner
- Collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to meet the purpose
- Accurate and up to date
- Kept for no longer than is necessary
- Kept secure to maintain integrity and confidentiality
- Processed in an accountable manner

Policy Aim

To ensure the Council continuously complies with all relevant legislation and good practice in order to successfully protect the data it holds and processes.

Policy Objectives

To achieve the overall aim the Council will:

- Provide adequate resources to support an effective corporate approach to Data Protection
- Ensure all staff are appropriately trained to perform their roles
- Comply with all relevant statutory obligations
- Respect the confidentiality of all personal data, irrespective of source
- Publicise the Council's commitment to Data Protection
- Compile and maintain appropriate policies, procedures and documentation
- Promote general awareness and provide specific training, advice and guidance at all levels

- to ensure standards are met
- Monitor and review compliance with legislation and introduce changes where necessary
- Assist the Regulator and auditors as necessary

Processing of Information:

The Council, through appropriate management controls will, when processing personal information on any individual:

- Observe fully conditions regarding the collection and use of information in order to meet the Council's legal obligations under Data Protection legislation
- Collect, process and retain data only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil operational needs or to comply with any legal requirement
- Ensure that the rights of people about whom information is held can be fully exercised including:-
 - The right to be informed that processing is being undertaken
 - The right of access to personal information
 - The right to withdraw or amend consent for processing*
 - The right to correct, amend or erase information
 - The right to be forgotten*.
- Ensure staff are reminded that data covered by Data Protection legislation is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- *Ensure where an individual exercises their right to be forgotten or withdraws permission for their data to be processed, the Council will inform the subject of the potential impact of this decision, as it may prevent the Council being able to provide a service which the subject has requested.
- **Note:** The right to be forgotten or withdraw permission for processing does not apply where the Council has a statutory obligation or requirement to process that information.

Fair Obtaining/Processing

Individuals whose data is collected by the Council must be made aware at the time of collection of all the processes that data may be subject to. No manual or automatic processing of an individual's data can take place unless reasonable steps have been taken to make that individual aware of that processing.

Individuals must also be informed of likely recipients of their information, both internal and external, and also be given details of who to contact in order to query the use or content of their information (Data Protection Officer).

When consent is used as the lawful basis for processing data, it must be explicit and granular to allow the subject to 'opt-in' to any processing activity. The Privacy Notice where this data is collected should also explain how a subject's data will be used, how they can amend or withdraw their consent, and to whom they should contact to do so.

Data Uses and Purposes

- All processing performed must only be for the purpose that is necessary to enable the Council to perform its duties and services, and which has been notified by the Council to the Information Commissioner. Personal data can only be processed in line with notified purposes.
- No new processing may take place until the data subjects have been informed and, their consent obtained.
- All personal data should be regarded as confidential and only disclosed to persons (internal and external) who are listed for the purpose concerned in the Council's current notification

AND whose authority to receive it has been explicitly established.

- Information owned by the Council must not be used for non-Council purposes. This applies when Council data is being processed at employees' homes. Employees will be held responsible for any misuse or unauthorised disclosures while the data is in their control.

What counts as Personal Data?

The term 'personal data' applies to any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified in particular by reference to an identifier.

This definition provides for a wide range of personal identifiers to constitute personal data, including name, identification number, location data or online identifier, reflecting changes in technology and the way organisations collect information about people.

The regulations apply to both automated personal data and to manual filing systems where personal data is accessible according to specific criteria. This could include chronologically ordered sets of manual records containing personal data.

Personal data that has been pseudonymised – e.g. key-coded – can fall within the scope of the regulations depending on how difficult it is to attribute the pseudonym to a particular individual. Likewise, anonymised data that can be 'reverse engineered', or manipulated on its own or in conjunction with other data sources to identify an individual, will also be classified as personal data.

A name and address, or information attached to a reference number that we can use to look someone up, are both personal data. So is a company e-mail address if it includes a person's name.

Data Quality & Document Retention

Information processed shall not be excessive or irrelevant to the notified purposes.

Information will be held only for as long as is necessary for the notified purposes, after which it shall be deleted or destroyed in accordance with the Council's Document Retention periods.

Whenever information is processed, reasonable measures shall be taken to ensure that it is up-to-date and accurate. A data subject has the right to request that any errors or omissions are rectified.

Organisational Responsibilities and Security

- All personal data should be kept secure, in a manner appropriate to its sensitivity and the likely harm should a breach occur. Security shall be applied to all stages of processing to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure (internal or external), damage (accidental or deliberate) or loss.
- Personal data must not be left on display or unsecured when unattended. Computer software shall be kept secure when not in use. System entry passwords should be known only to the holder and be changed regularly.
- Everyone managing and handling personal information is appropriately trained to do so.
- Everyone managing and handling personal information is appropriately supervised.
- Anybody wanting to make enquiries about handling personal information knows what to do.
- Queries about handling personal information are promptly and courteously dealt with.
- Methods of handling personal information are clearly described.
- A regular review and audit is made of the way personal information is managed.
- Methods of handling personal information are regularly assessed and evaluated.
- Performance with handling personal information is regularly assessed and evaluated.
- All Council employees and Councillors will be provided with a copy of the Policy as adopted

by the Council together with appropriate training. Employees have a duty to follow the Policy and procedures and to co-operate with the Council to ensure this Policy is effective.

- Action may be taken against any employee / councillor who fails to comply or commits a breach of the Policy.
- It is the duty of individual employees and councillors to ensure that personal information held by them is dealt with in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- Processing carried out by a third party on behalf of the Council shall be subject to a contract, which stipulates compliance with Data Protection regulations and this policy.
- Similarly, when the Council is processing personal data on behalf of a third party it will need to demonstrate that the data is subject to the same standards of care.

Any breaches of security shall be reported to the Clerk

Complaints & Queries

Queries regarding this policy should be addressed to the Clerk

Adopted at the Council meeting held on: 4 June 2025

Minute Reference: 25/152

Next Review Due: February 2028