



Retention of information held on behalf of the County Councillors

The assumptions have been made that Political Parties are responsible for maintaining their original records and that the Council will hold copies of documents relating to council business. On that basis the following retention periods are recommended for information held by elected members:

Type of record	Retention
Political parties' papers	Keep for 3 years after last action, and then destroy.
Leader of council papers, leader of opposition papers	Keep for 3 years after last action, and then destroy.
*Correspondence and advice	Keep for 3 years after last action, and then destroy.
Information about attendance (not the official record)	Keep for one year after the meeting, and then destroy.
Councillors' own notes about official meetings they attended	Destroy upon publication of the official minutes.
Correspondence with central government and MPs about council business	Keep for 6 years after last action, and then destroy.

In the case of a change in administration, the files should be sent to Democratic Services. Any files that need to be retained will be sent to the corporate Records Centre, who will place a 3 year retention period on them. For more information on the Records Centre, please visit staffnet at <https://staffnet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/internal-services/information-management-service/>

Confidential papers must be brought into Democratic Services in Shire Hall for secure destruction.

***PLEASE NOTE:** In July 2015, the Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse issued a moratorium on the destruction of files with content relating “directly or indirectly to the sexual abuse of children or to child protection and care.” Knowingly destroying any such files could constitute a criminal offence under the Inquiries Act 2005.

Until further notice, you must not destroy any records relating to children; services provided to children; and individuals who work(ed) with children. If you have any records that meet these criteria please contact the [Information Management Service](#) for advice.

Freedom of Information

Elected members in their own right are not subject to the FOIA, as it only applies to public authorities. However, there are circumstances where information produced, received or held by elected members could be liable to disclosure. If the information held by the County Council **relates to the business** of the County Council it is subject to disclosure. Therefore, if you were to write to or email an officer of the Council about an issue that related to the business of the council, then the information would be covered by FOIA.

Examples to illustrate when information would be covered

- Information emailed by an elected member about the education review, to an education officer, would be covered.
- Information sent from one elected member to another would be covered if it related to council business.
- Details of expense claims submitted to the council would be covered
- Comments on reports which have been prepared for consideration by a council committee would be covered