

Records Management Guidance for Elected Members

Elected Members are responsible for managing their information in line with obligations set out in law and as defined by corporate business needs. The General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 particularly require personal data to be maintained securely.

It is important that all Elected Members take time to ensure that their paper and electronic records are retained and disposed of appropriately.

Paper Records

- Paper records must be kept securely, in lockable containers;
- Paper records should be transported in a way that mitigates against the risk of theft or loss e.g. do not carry 'loose' paper records as this increases the risk of dropping or losing them;

At the end of their term, Members should send paper files to Democratic Services. Files that need to be retained will be stored in the corporate Records Centre in line with the retention periods below. Confidential papers must be brought into Democratic Services for secure destruction.

More information on the Records Centre and records disposal is available on Staffnet at <https://staffnet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/internal-services/information-management-service/>

Electronic Records

- Electronic records should be created and managed in line with GCC policies including the *Blackberry Work Acceptable Use Policy* (https://staffnet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/4022/blackberry_work_acceptable_use_policy_-_elected_members.docx) and

Social Media Policy for Members

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/12652/gcc_0995_social_media_policy_document_members_city_council_dev3.pdf

- Devices used to access electronic records should be restricted by enabling password-protection and encryption. Council devices, including laptops, have this functionality.

At the end of their term *The Leader & Cabinet* Members should ensure that electronic files are transferred to the shared network drive **G:\Cabinet – Elections 21 for retention in line with the retention periods listed below.**

Any electronic documents stored on Members personal drives will be deleted at the end of their term.

Retention of Records

All Members are responsible for keeping their own records for the lengths of time specified by legal and business requirements below. These requirements cover **both** paper and electronic formats:

Political parties' papers – keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy;

Leader of council's papers, Group leaders' papers – keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy;

Correspondence and advice – keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy;

Councillors' own notes about official meetings they attended can be destroyed upon publication of the official minutes;

Correspondence with central government and MPs about council business – keep for 6 years after last action, then destroy.

Records relating to Members' declarations/registers of interest – keep for 6 years from the date the Member leaves office.

The Corporate Retention and Disposal Schedule contains information on how long to keep and then dispose of other file types:

<https://staffnet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/internal-services/information-management-service/storing-retrieving-and-disposing-of-data/records-centre/records-retention-and-disposal/which-records-need-to-be-retained-and-for-how-long/#main>

***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.

For more information, please contact Teresa Wilmshurst, IMS Team Manager – Records on x4265 or via teresa.wilmshurst@gloucestershire.gov.uk.