Widdington Parish Council

Data Protection Policy

Widdington Parish Council (the Council) recognises its responsibility to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (The Act). The Act regulates the use of personal data. The Council registers annually with The Information Commissioner`s Office and identifies the clerk as the Data Controller.

The Data Protection Act (DPA)

The Act sets high standards for the handling of personal information and protecting individuals` rights for privacy. It also regulates how personal information can be collected, handled and used. The Act applies to anyone holding personal information about people, electronically or on paper.

As a local authority, the Council has a number of procedures in place to ensure that it complies with The Act when holding personal information, the Council has to notify the Information Commissioner that it holds personal data about individuals.

Personal Information is any information that may identify a living individual.

When dealing with personal Information, the council`s officers and Councillors must ensure that:

- **Data is processed fairly and lawfully**
  Personal information should only be collected from individuals if officers and Councillors have been open and honest about why they want the personal information.
- **Data is processed for specified purposes only**
  The information gained must only be held, used and disclosed for the purpose for which it was obtained.
- **Data is relevant to what it is needed for**
  Information will be monitored so that too much or too little is not kept; only information that is needed should be held.
- **Data is accurate and up to date**
  Personal Information should be accurate, if it is not it should be corrected.
- **Data is not kept longer than it is needed**
  Information no longer needed will be shredded or securely disposed of.
- **Data is processed in accordance with the rights of individuals.**
  Individuals must be informed, upon request, of all the personal information held about them.
- **Data is kept securely**

Only officers and Councillors can access the information. It cannot be accessed by members of the public.

Storing and accessing data

All information is stored in locked cabinets and all information stored on the Council`s computer is password protected. Once data is not needed anymore, is out of date, or has served it`s use and falls outside the minimum retention time of Council`s document retention policy, it must be shredded or securely deleted from the computer.

The Council is aware that people have the right to access any personal information that is held about them. If a person makes a subject access request to see any data that is being held about them the Council must send them a copy of all of the personal information that is held about them within 40 business days of the request.

A fee of £12.50 will be charged to cover administration, photocopying and postage charges. The requestor must prove that they are the individual about whom the information has been requested, by way of photographic identification.

Disclosure of personal information

A Councillor may have access to Personal Information to help carry out their duties. This access will be limited to information which is necessary for the purpose and the information should only be used for that specific purpose. Information must not be used for political reasons unless the individual has consented.

Personal Information can be disclosed to third parties if that disclosure is in accordance with the exemptions under the DPA. The Clerk will not disclose personal Information held unless he/she is satisfied that an exemption has been established.

Confidentiality

The Council`s officers and Councillors must be aware that when complaints or queries are made, these must remain confidential unless the individual gives permission otherwise.

Review

This policy will be reviewed biannually.

	Date	Minute reference
Adopted	02/04/2020	
Reviewed	05/12/2024	**12.24.11.2**

Date to be reviewed; November 2026   (Or sooner if required by legislation)