

Little Malvern & Welland Parish Council

Data Retention Policy

Version	Date	Author	Changes Made	Approved By	Next Update
0.1	14/07/2026	Paul Riordan	Initial Draft		

Data Retention Policy

1. Purpose

This Data Retention Policy supports the Council’s IT & Data Governance Policy by defining how long different categories of information must be kept, how they are stored, and how they are securely disposed of. It ensures compliance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and NALC guidance.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors, the Clerk, volunteers, and contractors who create, store, or process information on behalf of the Council. It covers:

- Emails and correspondence
- Council records and documents
- Personal data
- Financial information
- Planning and regulatory documents
- Digital files stored on councillors’ personal devices

3. Principles

- The Council retains information only for as long as necessary.
- Retention periods are based on statutory requirements and operational need.
- The Clerk maintains the master retention schedule.
- Councillors must not delete or retain information outside this schedule.
- Personal data must be stored securely and disposed of confidentially.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Council

- Approves and reviews this policy annually.

The Clerk

- Maintains the retention schedule.
- Ensures records are archived or disposed of correctly.

- Coordinates FOI responses.

Councillors, volunteers and contractors

- Follow retention rules for emails and documents.
- Delete local copies when instructed by the Clerk.
- Forward relevant correspondence to the Clerk for filing.

5. Retention Schedule

The following retention periods apply unless legislation requires otherwise.

5.1 Governance & Meetings

- **Agendas and Minutes (approved):** Permanent
- **Draft Minutes:** Until approval
- **Meeting Papers:** 5 years
- **Policies and Procedures:** Current version + 6 years

5.2 Correspondence

- **General enquiries:** 2 years
- **Complaints:** 6 years
- **FOI Requests:** 3 years
- **Emails containing personal data:** As required for the purpose, then securely deleted

5.3 Financial Records

- **Invoices, receipts, payments:** 6 years
- **Annual accounts and audit records:** Permanent
- **Budget documents:** 6 years

5.4 Personnel & Volunteer Records

- **Councillor declarations of acceptance:** Term of office + 6 years
- **Volunteer contact details:** Duration of role + 1 year

5.5 Planning & Regulatory Documents

- **Planning applications and responses:** 3 years
- **Licensing or regulatory correspondence:** 6 years

5.6 Digital Records

- **Emails:** As per categories above
- **Documents stored in council-approved cloud storage:** As per retention schedule

- **Documents on councillors' personal devices:** Must be deleted once archived by the Clerk

6. Storage Requirements

- Personal data must be stored in council-approved cloud storage.
- Devices must be password/PIN-protected and preferably encrypted.
- Councillors must not store council documents in personal cloud accounts.
- The Clerk maintains structured folders for official records.

7. Disposal Requirements

- Paper records containing personal data must be shredded.
- Paper copies of public documents (e.g., agendas, minutes) may be recycled.
- Digital files must be permanently deleted from devices and cloud storage.
- Councillors must delete local copies when instructed by the Clerk.

8. Freedom of Information (FOI)

- Information held on councillors' personal devices may be subject to FOI.
- Deleting information to avoid disclosure is unlawful.
- The Clerk coordinates all FOI responses.

9. Data Breaches

- Any suspected breach must be reported to the Clerk immediately.
- The Clerk will assess whether the ICO must be notified within 72 hours.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- New IT systems are adopted
- A data breach or FOI issue highlights a need for revision



20th July 2026