

# Elected Members Records Management and Retention Guidance

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 [Storing, retrieving and disposing of data](#)

## Electronic Records

- Electronic records should be created and managed in line with GCC policies including the [Members ICT Equipment & Information \(acceptable use and disposal\) Policy](#) and the [Social Media Policy for Members](#)
- 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 their party's relevant area within SharePoint for retention in line with the retention periods listed below. The Leader & Cabinet Members will receive an email towards the end of their term which will provide details of how to do this.**

**Any electronic documents stored on Members OneDrive 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:

<b>Political party's papers</b>	keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy
<b>Leader of council's papers, Group leaders' papers</b>	keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy
<b>Correspondence and advice</b>	keep for 3 years after last action, then destroy
<b>Councillors' own notes about official meetings they attended</b>	can be destroyed upon publication of the official minutes
<b>Correspondence with central government and MPs about council business</b>	keep for 6 years after last action, then destroy
<b>Records relating to Members' declarations/registers of interest</b>	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.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Until further notice, teams must not destroy any records relating to **Covid-19**. In June 2022, an independent public inquiry was set up to examine the UK's response to and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and learn lessons for the future.

The UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry is established under the Inquiries Act (2005). Knowingly destroying any records relating to Covid-19 could constitute a criminal offence under this act. All related records will be placed under legal hold until the closure of the investigation.

At any point, Members can deposit their paper records with the Council's Records Centre, where they will be stored securely for the length of the appropriate retention period. The records will be allocated to the ownership of the Monitoring Officer and will be reviewed before any disposal takes place. Boxes and information on how to deposit files in the Records Centre can be obtained by emailing [recordscentre@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:recordscentre@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or visiting Staffnet at [About the Records Centre](#).

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