



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY

Date: 7 February 2024

Introduction

Felsted Parish Council recognises that its data records are an important public asset, and a key resource for effective operation and accountability. Like any asset, they require careful management and this policy sets out the Council's responsibilities and activities in regard to the management of its data records.

Scope

This policy will ensure that data is managed effectively throughout the organization in accordance with professional principles and legislation. It applies to all the records of Felsted Parish Council.

A data record is any recorded information on paper or electronic which is created, collected, processed, used, stored or disposed of by Felsted Parish Council employees, as well as those acting as its agents in the course of a Council activity. [Not all documentary materials we use are records. For example, reference material, stocks of publications and documents retained for distribution, extra copies made for convenience of reference and personal papers are all not data records in the terms of this policy.]

Policy Statement

The aim of the policy is to define a framework for managing the Council's data records to ensure that the Council:

- Creates and captures authentic and reliable data records to demonstrate evidence, Accountability and information about its decisions and activities
- Facilitates auditing and protects our legal and other rights
- Maintains data records securely and preserves access to them
- Disposes appropriately of records that are no longer required
- Protects vital data records, which it needs to order to function effectively
- Maintains data records to meet the council's business needs
- Addresses the needs of the council's stakeholders, including the public and employees.
- Conforms to any legal and statutory requirements relating to record-keeping
- Complies with government directives.

Identification of roles and responsibilities

Felsted Parish Council is responsible for approving a framework for managing and overseeing its duties in relation to data management as set out in this policy.

The Clerk or Assistant Clerk will advise on the retention and management of data records, and where appropriate will organise custody of those records deemed worthy of permanent preservation.

All Felsted Parish Council employees will be responsible for creating and maintaining data records in relation to their work that are authentic and reliable. They will also be responsible for receiving Freedom of Information Act requests, and passing them on to the Clerk.

Training and Awareness

Since all Felsted Parish Council employees are involved in creating, maintaining and using data records, it is vital that everyone understands their responsibilities as set out in this policy. Appropriate training will be given to ensure that all staff are aware of their obligations around Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Data Records Management.

Data Record Creation, Keeping and Maintenance

The Council maintains a data record keeping system that documents its activities and provides for quick and easy retrieval of information. The system exists for paper and electronic data records and ensures that the data records are properly stored and protected, and can easily be located and retrieved quickly and efficiently.

Data Record Retention and Disposal

It is important that disposal happens as part of a managed process and is adequately documented. Therefore, the Council will define the arrangements for the appraisal and selection of data records for disposal. The system will ensure that records subject to a Freedom of Information request are not destroyed.

Access

Felsted Parish Council will ensure that decisions regarding access to the data records are documented so that they are consistent, and can be explained and referred to.

Adopted at the Council meeting held on 7 February 2024

Minute Reference 24/35

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