

Perranzabuloe Parish Council Data Protection Policy

Context and overview

Introduction

Perranzabuloe Parish Council needs to gather and use certain information about individuals. These can include customers, suppliers, business contacts, employees and other people the organisation has a relationship with or may need to contact.

This policy describes how this personal data must be collected, handled and stored to meet the council's data protection standards and to comply with the law.

Why this policy exists

The data protection policy ensures Perranzabuloe Parish Council :

- Complies with data protection law and follows good practice
- Protects the rights of staff, councillors, parishioners, tenants, business contacts and suppliers
- Is open about how it stores and processes individual's data
- Protects itself from the risk of data breach

Data Protection Law

The Data Protection Act 1998 describes how organisations including Perranzabuloe Parish Council must collect, handle and store information. These rules apply regardless of whether data is stored electronically, on paper or on other materials. To comply with the law personal information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed unlawfully.

The Data Protection Act is underpinned by eight important principles. These say that personal data must:

1. Be processed fairly and lawfully
2. Be obtained only for specific and lawful purposes
3. Be adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. Be accurate and kept up to date
5. Not be held for longer than necessary
6. Processed in accordance of the rights of data subjects
7. Be protected in appropriate ways
8. Not be transferred outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory also ensures an adequate level of protection

People, risks and responsibilities

Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- Perranzabuloe Parish Council members
- Perranzabuloe Clerk
- Staff and volunteers of Perranzabuloe Parish Council
- All contractors, suppliers and other people working on behalf of Perranzabuloe Parish Council.

It applies to all the data the council hold relating to identifiable individuals, even if that information falls outside the Data Protection Act 1998. This can include:

- Names of individuals
- Postal Addresses
- Email addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Any additional personal information relating to individuals.

Data Protection Risks

- Breaches of confidentiality
- Failing to offer choice to individuals regarding how data relating to them is used
- Reputational damage if access is gained to sensitive data.

Responsibilities

All individuals have some responsibility for ensuring data is handled and processed in line with this policy. These people have key area of responsibility:

- The council as a unitary body is ultimately responsible for ensuring Perranzabuloe Parish Council meet its legal obligations regarding data protection.
- The Clerk is responsible for:
 - Keeping the council updated about data protection responsibilities, risks and issues.
 - Reviewing all data protection procedures and related policies within an agreed timescale.
 - Arrange data protection training and advice for the people covered by this policy.
 - Handling data protection questions from all people covered by this policy.
 - Dealing with requests from individuals to see the data Perranzabuloe Parish Council holds about them.
 - Checking and approving any contracts or agreements with third parties that may handle the company's sensitive data.

General Guidelines

- Data should only be accessed if it is needed for work or reference.
- Data should not be shared informally. Access to confidential information must be requested from the Clerk.
- Training should be undertaken to help people understand their responsibilities when handling data.
- Employees should keep all data secure by taking sensible precautions.
- Data should be regularly reviewed and updated, if it is no longer required it should be disposed of.

Data Storage

Stored on Paper

- Paper or files should be stored in a secure drawer or filing cabinet.
- Paper or printouts should not be left where unauthorised people can see them.
- Documents should be shredded and disposed of when no longer required.

Stored Electronically

Data must be protected from unauthorised access, accidental deletion and malicious hacking attempts.

- Computers must not be accessed by unauthorised persons.
- CD and DVD's should be locked away securely when not in use.

- Data should only be stored on designated drives and servers.
- Data should be backed up frequently.
- Data stored on laptops or other mobile devices must be strongly password protected.
- All servers and computers containing data should be protected by approved security software and a firewall.

Data Use

- When working with personal data screens of computers should not be visible to unauthorised persons.
- Personal data should not be shared informally.
- Staff and councillors should not save copies of personal data to their own computers or devices.

Data Accuracy

The law requires Perranzabuloe Parish Council to take reasonable steps to ensure data is kept accurate and up to date.

- Data will be held in as few places as necessary.
- Staff should take every opportunity to ensure data is updated.
- Data should be updated as soon as inaccuracies are discovered.

Disclosing Data

- Subject access requests can be made by an individual by email to ask what information a company holds about them and why.
- In certain circumstances the Data Protection Act allows personal data to be disclosed to law enforcement agencies without the consent of the data subject. Under these circumstances Perranzabuloe Parish Council will ensure the request is legitimate, seeking legal advice where necessary.