Little Horwood Parish Council
Data Protection Policy

1. Purpose
This policy sets out how Little Horwood Parish Council complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) when handling personal data. The Council is committed to protecting the privacy and rights of individuals in all aspects of its work.

2. Scope
This policy applies to all councillors, employees, contractors, and volunteers who have access to personal data held by the Council.

3. Roles and Responsibilities
- The **Data Controller** is the Parish Clerk, who determines how and why personal data is processed.
- The **Data Protection Lead** is the Parish Clerk.
- All members and staff must ensure compliance with this policy and complete any required training.

4. Data Protection Principles
The Council will ensure that all personal data is:

1. **Processed lawfully, fairly and transparently**
2. **Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes**
3. **Adequate, relevant and limited** to what is necessary
4. **Accurate and kept up to date**
5. **Kept no longer than necessary**
6. **Processed securely** to protect against unauthorised access, loss, or damage

5. Lawful Bases for Processing

The Council will process personal data under one or more lawful bases as defined in Article 6 of the UK GDPR, typically:

- Public task (carrying out statutory duties)
- Legal obligation
- Consent (where appropriate)
- Contractual necessity

6. Data Subject Rights

Individuals have the right to:

- Access their personal data
- Request correction or erasure
- Object to processing
- Request restriction of processing
- Request data portability (where applicable)

All requests should be made in writing to the Clerk.

7. Data Security

The Council will:

- Use council-owned email domains (e.g. clerk@littlehorwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk)
- Store electronic files on password-protected systems
- Lock paper records securely
- Restrict access to authorised personnel only

8. Data Retention

Personal data will be retained in accordance with the Council's **Document Retention Policy** and deleted or anonymised when no longer required.

9. Data Breaches

Any suspected data breach must be reported immediately to the Clerk/RFO, who will assess and, where necessary, report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours.

10. Training

All councillors, staff and volunteers handling personal data must complete annual data protection training.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when legislation or council operations change.

Regulatory References:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

Note: As per the **2025 Practitioners' Guide (Assertion 10)**, all smaller authorities must comply with GDPR, DPA 2018, and maintain an IT policy.