

Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy

1. Introduction

The Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Parish Council. This policy provides a framework through which this effective management and retention of public records can be achieved and properly audited.

It covers:-

Scope

Responsibilities

Retention Schedule

Scope of the policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council. Records are defined as all those documents which relate to the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its communications, transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. Some of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

3. Responsibilities

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and she is required to manage the Council's records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner. The Clerk must ensure that the records for which she is responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If a Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the Parish Council's records, they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual Councillors are strongly advised to undertake "weeding" and "housekeeping" on a regular basis. On resigning from the Council, Councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and 2018; the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

4. Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the types of records which it creates or holds in the course of its business. The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained for and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use. The Clerk is expected to

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manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. The retention schedule refers to all the Parish Council's records, irrespective of the media in which they are stored. Please see the Retention Schedule at Appendix 1.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Parish Council to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.

Adopted by Hornton Parish Council: 15 March 2021
Next review date: March 2023

Appendix 1

Retention Schedule

| Document | Minimum Retention | Reason |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|
| Minutes & Correspondence | | |
| Minute Books | Indefinite | Archive |
| Correspondence/Papers on Important Local Issues/Activities | Indefinite | Archive |
| Routine Correspondence, papers & Emails | 1 Year | Management |
| Finance & Payroll | | |
| Receipts & Payments Books | Indefinite | Archive |
| Annual Return & Audited Accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| Correspondence relating to Audit | Last Completed Audit | Audit/Management |
| Cheque Book Stubs | Last Completed Audit | Management |
| Paying In Books | Last Completed Audit | Management |
| Budgetary Control Papers | 2 Years + Current Year | Audit |
| Bank Statements | 7 Years | Audit/Management |
| Quotations | 7 Years | Audit |
| Paid Invoices | 7 Years | Audit/VAT |
| VAT Records | 7 Years | Audit/VAT |
| Salary Records | 3 Years | Audit |
| Tax & NI Records | 7 Years | Audit |
| Insurance Policies | | |
| Insurance Policies | Whilst Valid | Audit |
| Cert. Employers Liability | 40 Years | Audit/Legal |
| Cert. Public Liability | 40 Years | Audit/Legal |
| Insurance Claim Records | 7 Years after Conclusion | Legal |
| Policy Renewal Records | Whilst Valid | Management |
| General Management | | |
| Assets Register | Indefinite | Audit |
| Deeds; Leases | Indefinite | Audit |
| Burial Ground | | |
| Leases | Indefinite | Archive |
| Register of Burials | Indefinite | Archive |
| Register of Purchased Graves | Indefinite | Archive |
| Health & Safety Accident Books | 10 Years from Closure | Management |

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| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Equipment Inspection Records | 10 Years | Management |
| Premises Inspection Records | 10 Years | Management |
| Risk Assessments | 5 Years from Last Assessment | Management |

Members

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| Register of Members Interests | 18 Months after individual ceases to be a member | Management |
| Declarations of Acceptance | Term of Office + 1 Year | Management |

Personnel/Human Resources

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| Application Forms (unsuccessful) | 6 Months | Management |
| Application Forms (successful) | Period of Employment + 6 Months | Management |
| Disciplinary Records | Period of Employment + 6 Months | Management |
| Personal Files (appraisals/pay reviews etc.) | Period of Employment + 6 Months | Management |

Miscellaneous

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Complaints | 3 Years after Closure | Management |
| Freedom of Information Requests | 3 Years after Closure | Management |
| Press Releases | 1 Year | Management |
| Public Consultations | 3 Years | Management |
| Reports, Newsletters | As long as is useful | Management |

General correspondence will be retained for as long as is relevant, the minimum period is 1 year. An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and items that have reached their deletion or destruction date being deleted/destroyed and the remainder being considered for archiving.

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at CDC. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council's minutes and are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained for 1 year after building work has been completed.