

WINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

Discussed and approved at a meeting of council on Monday 14 October 2019

Wingham 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 document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

A small number of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

Responsibilities

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

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 retains 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 appropriately.

Retention Schedule

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

The Clerk is expected to 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. This retention schedule refers to records regardless of the media in which they are stored.

Destruction of documents will be undertaken in accordance with this Policy to avoid any inference that a document was destroyed in anticipation of a problem.

Appendix A: Document Retention and Disposal Schedule

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed paper copies of Council minutes of meetings must be kept indefinitely in storage. At regular intervals of not more than 5 years they must be archived and deposited with the higher authority.
Receipt & payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste
Bank statements including savings/deposit accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Bank paying books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Quotation & tenders	6 years after completion of contract	Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste
VAT records, P60s & P45s	6 years	VAT, Tax	Confidential waste
Petty Cash & postage books	6 years	VAT, Tax, Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit	Bin
Wages payroll & pension records	6 years	Pensions Act 2014	Confidential waste
Personnel records,	6 years	Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
including application, references, SSP & maternity records.			
Insurance Policies	While valid	Management	Bin
Insurance company names & policy numbers	Indefinite	Management	
Certificate of insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which the insurance commenced or was renewed.	Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998. Management.	Bin
Scale of fees & charges	6 years	Management	Bin
Park equipment inspections and Annual Report	5 years	Management, potential claims	Bin
Trees local survey & maintenance record	Retained for as long as relevant	Management, reference	Bin
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, management	
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste
Information from other bodies, eg circulars from county associations, NALC, principal authorities	Retained for as long as is useful and relevant.		Bin
Magazines & journals	Retained for as long as is useful and relevant		Bin
General correspondence &	One year unless it relates to	Management, Limitation Act 1980	Confidential waste

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
emails	specific categories in this policy then both paper & electronic should be kept for as long as needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements.		
Accident/incident book/reports	3 years	Reporting of injuries, potential claims, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Act 2013	Confidential waste
Allotment register & plans	Indefinite	Audit, management	
For planning papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications • Appeals • Trees • Local Development Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One year unless significant ongoing development • One year unless significant ongoing development • One year • Retained for as long as in force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Management • Reference/Management • Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bin • Bin • Bin • Bin