



## **SOUTH WONSTON PARISH COUNCIL RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY**

Policy Revised Sept 2015

Policy Revised January 2019

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**

**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.

**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 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 record they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they hold may be subject to the provisions of the GDPR; the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

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 manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account for 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.

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

## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCILS**

### **Retention of Documents**

Attached is a table indicating the appropriate retention periods for audit purposes and the reasons for retention.

### **Record Types**

The major classes of record specifically relating to each function have been identified and recommendations are given for each. However, the list of record types provides examples only and is not exhaustive.

### **Minimum Retention Period**

This column gives the minimum period for which the record should be retained before it is destroyed or reviewed.

### **Permanent Preservation**

Documents of historical importance, if not retained by the council, should be offered first to the County Record Office.

<b>DOCUMENT</b>	<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>REASON</b>
Minutes (signed)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt and payment account(s)	6 years + current	Archive
Receipt Invoices + application to hire facilities	6 years + current	VAT / HMRC
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Formal tenders / Quotes	6 years + current	Statute of Limitations
Paid invoices	6 years + current	VAT/ HMRC
Paid cheques	6 years +current	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years + current	VAT/ HMRC
Planning	Indefinite	Archive
Timesheets – attached to payslip	6 years + current	VAT/ HMRC
Pension Spreadsheet / Payroll Software	13 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Insurance Certificates	40 years from commencement	Liability for Employment
Investments	6 years +current	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Members allowances register	6 years + current	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Parish Council Projects	6 years + current	Archive
Accident Book	25 years	Management
Equipment Inspection & Premises Record	25 years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 years	Management
Complaints	2 years after closure of case	Management
Freedom of Information Request	2 years after closure of case	Management
Register of Officers Interest	Indefinite	Management
Human Resources Records – not payroll	6 years after ceasing employment	Management

**Clarification of other documents not mentioned above may be treated as follows -**

Planning Papers

The Local Planning Authority, Winchester City Council (WCC) hold planning documents relevant to the Parish and these are available online, however for its own records and added ease of retrieving documents it would be beneficial for the Parish Council to retain some records itself ie where the proposed development is significant/contentious.

Copies of Structure Plans, Local Plans and similar documents should be retained as long as they are in force.

Information from Other Bodies (e.g. circulars etc. from Councils, Associations, and other bodies too numerous to mention) – such information should be retained as long as it is useful and relevant.

Insurance All policies should be kept for as long as it is possible for a claim to be made from. A permanent record of insurance companies and policy numbers for all insured risks should be kept. Regulation 4 of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (s.2753) requires local councils, as employers, to retain certificates of insurance liability for injury or disease to their employments arising out of their employment (Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969) for a period of 40 years from the date on which the insurance is commenced or renewed.

General correspondence - Unless it relates to specific categories outlined in the policy, correspondence, both paper and electronic, should be kept. Records should be kept for as long as they are needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements or to protect legal and other rights and interest. An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and items that have reached their deletion or destruction date be deleted/destroyed.

Note: The above records may be in both, or either, digital or paper form.