



Retention of Documents and Records Management

Bradwell 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 to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. A small percentage of the Parish Council's records may 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 this policy is the Parish Clerk. The person responsible for records management will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and timely. Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

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. Members of staff are expected to manage their current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different kinds of retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

Record Management table

| Document | Minimum Retention Period | Reason |
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| Signed Minutes of Council Meetings | Indefinite | Legal requirement under the Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41 |
| Agendas | Indefinite | To support the minutes |
| Correspondence & papers on important local issues & activities | 6 years | For reference |
| Invoices | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Paid cheques | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| VAT records | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Pension records | Two years after the former employee dies | Recommendation from SLCC |
| Management finance & payroll scale of fees and charges | 5 Years | Recommendation from SLCC |
| Management receipt and payment accounts | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Archive accounts/ financial annual return | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Receipt books of all kinds | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| VAT bank statements (including deposit/ savings accounts) | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Bank paying-in books | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Cheque books stubs | Ten years | Potential for VAT inspections |
| Audit budgetary control papers | 5 years | Recommendation from SLCC |
| Quotations and Tenders | 2 years | Reference only |
| Routine correspondence, papers & emails | 2 years | Reference only |

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| Contracts | Six years after the contract has ended | Should a claim be brought under that contract |
| Hand written notes from meetings | Once typed up and the typed notes are approved at the next available meeting | These are not the legal record of the meeting. |
| Insurance policies - Certificate of Employers Liability | 21 years | Should a claim arise |
| Insurance claim records | 7 Years after all obligations are concluded (allowing for claimant to reach age of 25) | Should a claim arise |
| Health & Safety accident books | 25 years from closure | Should a claim arise |
| Management premises inspection records | 25 years from closure | Should a claim arise |
| Management risk assessments | 25 years from closure | Should a claim arise |
| Management equipment inspection | 25 years from closure | Should a claim arise |
| Timesheets | 2 years | For a comparison of sickness and absence |
| Management of personnel/human resources application forms (interviewed - unsuccessful) | 6 Months | Should a claim arise |
| Personnel files (not payroll information) | not after ceasing employment | Should a claim arise |
| Title deeds, leases, agreements and correspondence | Whilst the council owns or occupies the land | Not required after the council is no longer owning or occupying the land |
| Social media messages | 3 months | Only relevant whilst being dealt with |

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| Allotment plot holders register | 1 year | Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required. |
| Members Register of Interests | Destroy after member ceases to be a councillor | Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required. |
| Press releases | 2 years | Reference only |
| Surveys & returns | Until project completed | Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required. |
| Newsletters etc. from other bodies | Retain as long as useful | Used for reference purposes and advice |
| Planning applications | Not retained | Held by Planning Authority |
| Parish Council newsletters | Three years | Reference only |