



# **BLEDLOW-CUM-SAUNDERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY**

### **1. Introduction:**

- a. The Council accumulates much information and data during the course of its everyday activities. This includes data generated internally in addition to information obtained from individual and external organisation.
- b. Documents may be retained in either 'hard copy' or in electronic form. For the purpose of this policy 'document' and 'record' refers to both hard copy and electronic records.
- c. It is important that documents are retained for an adequate period of time. In contrast the Council should not retain documents longer than necessary. Timely disposal should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations so that personal information is not retained longer than necessary.

### **2. Scope and Objective of the Policy**

- a. The aim of this policy is to provide a working framework to determine which documents are to be retained, for how long, and then disposed of and by what method.
- b. There are some records that do not need to be kept at all or that are routinely destroyed in the course of business. This usually applies to information that is duplicated, unimportant or only of short-term value.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities for Document Retention and Disposal**

- a. Councils are responsible for determining whether to retain or dispose of documents and should undertake a review of documentation at least on an annual basis to ensure that any unnecessary documentation being held is disposed of in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- b. Councils should ensure that all employees are aware of the retention / disposal schedule.

### **4. Document Disposal Protocol**

- a. Documents should only be disposed of if reviewed in accordance with the following:
  - Is retention required to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements?
  - Is retention required to meet the operation needs of the service
  - Is retention required to evidence events in the case of dispute?
  - Is retention required because the document or record is of historic interest of intrinsic value?
- b. When documents are scheduled for disposal the method of disposal should be appropriate to the nature of and sensitivity of the documents concerned.

- c. Documents can be disposed of by any of the following methods:
- Non- confidential records: place in waste paper bin for disposal.
  - Confidential records or records giving personal information: Shred documents
  - Deletion of computer records
  - Transmission of records to an external body such as the County Records Office.

## 5. Scanning of Documents

- a. In general, once a document has been scanned onto a document image system the original becomes redundant. There is no specific legislation covering the format for which local government records are retained following electronic storage, except for those prescribed by HM Revenue and Customs.
- b. As a general rule hard copies of scanned documents should be retained for three months after scanning
- c. Original documents required for VAT and tax purposes should be retained for six years unless a shorter period has been agreed with HM Revenue and Customs.

## 6. Review of Document Retention

- a. It is planned to review, update and where appropriate amend this document on a regular basis (at least every three years in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued by the Lord Chancellor).

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason	Storage and Disposal
<b>Agendas and Minutes</b>			
Draft / notes and recordings of minutes taken at meetings	Until the date of approval of those minutes	Management	Disposed of by shredding and recordings deleted.
Signed Council & Committee Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed papers copies of Council minutes of meetings must be kept indefinitely in safe storage. At regular intervals they must be archived and deposited with the County Archives.
Agendas and reports	5 years	Management	Disposed of by shredding.
<b>Finance, Payroll, Insurance and Investments</b>			
Receipt & payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage on Computer. At regular intervals they must be archived and deposited with the County Archives.
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Stored on computer backed up to Dropbox. Disposed of by shredding.
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
VAT records	6 years	VAT	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	Stored on computer backed up to Dropbox. Disposed of by shredding.

Payroll and pension information	12 years	Superannuation	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Insurance policies	Whilst valid (note the following two items)	Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Insurance company names and policy numbers	Indefinite	Management	Stored with Clerk on computer backed up to Dropbox
Employer and public liability insurance certificates	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753) Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and on computer backed up to Dropbox
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and on computer backed up to Dropbox
<b>Other</b>			
Routine correspondence paper and email	As required to action the information or request	Management	Stored with Clerk and disposed by shredding where appropriate.
Register of electors	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Management	Stored on Clerk's computer backed up to Dropbox. Deletion when no longer required.
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Accidents / Incident reports	20 years	Potential claims	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Declaration of acceptance of office	Term of Office + 1 year	Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Complaints	2 years from closure	Management	Stored with the Clerk in safe storage and disposed by shredding.
Information from other bodies e.g. circulars from Unitary Council, NALC etc	Retained for as long as it is useful and relevant	n/a	Stored with Clerk and disposed by shredding where appropriate.
.org.uk email accounts	Whilst in use + 2 months	Management	Whilst used by a Member upon a Member ceasing to be a Councillor the password will be changed and the account deleted after 6 months.
Local / historical information	Indefinite	Management	To be securely kept for the benefit of the Parish with the Clerk or County Archives Office.