

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL
RECORDS MANAGEMENT & RETENTION POLICY
Document Reference – BPC_POL33

Version History & Change Control

Version	Release Date	Distribution	Notes	Adopted?	Date Adopted
0.1	2 nd March 2016	Finance Committee	For review and adoption if approved		
1.0	3 rd March 2016	Full Council	For adoption at Full Council meeting 8th March 2016		
1.2	5 th July 2018	Full Council	For adoption at Full Council meeting 5 th July 2018		

Document Sign Off and Adoption

Signed off for Adoption by Councillor 1:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signed off for Adoption by Councillor 2:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Adoption Witnessed by the Clerk to Bearsted Parish Council:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Document Purpose

This document describes the Parish Council's policy for records management and retention.

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. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, parish councils are required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which the parish council creates in the course of its business

This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies
- Planning Papers
- Retention of documents

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 percentage 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 this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council.

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, Employees & Councillors must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information policy
- Data Protection policy

And with other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

PLANNING PAPERS

- **Permission Granted**

All papers retained until the development has been completed to allow the Council to check that the development proceeds in accordance with the terms of the permission. Appeal decisions should be retained indefinitely as it may be required should there be longer term implications e.g. the decision creates a precedent for other developments in the locality.

- **Permission Refused**

All papers should be retained until the period in which an appeal can be made has expired. If a resulting appeal is dismissed the documentation should be retained in case further applications relating to the same site result.

- Structure Plans and Local Plans should also be retained.

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCILS

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.

The retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

Document or Record	Min Retention Period	Reason
Minutes & Correspondence		
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Correspondence & papers on important local issues & activities		
Routine correspondence, papers & emails	Indefinite 6 months	Archive Management
Finance & Payroll		
Receipt and Payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return and Audited accounts	Indefinite	Archive
All Bank Statements	Last completed Audit yr	Audit
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed Audit yr	Audit
Cheque Books Stubs	Last completed Audit yr	Audit
Correspondence relating to audit matters	Last completed Audit yr	Audit
Budgetary Control Papers	2 years + current year	Audit
Quotations and Tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Payroll records	Last completed Audit yr	Audit

Insurance Policies		
Cert of Employers Liability	50 years	Legal requirement
Cert of Public Liability	21 years	Legal requirement
Other insurance policies	while valid or a claim can be made	Management
Insurance Claim Records	7 Years after all obligations are concluded	Legal requirement
Policy renewal records & correspondence	While Valid	Management
General Management		
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Members allowances	6 years	Tax
Allotments		
Register, plans, receipt books	Indefinite	Audit/
Management and scale of charges		
Health & Safety		
Accident Books (injuries to Adults)	25 Years from closure	Management
Accident Books (injuries to Children)	25 Years from closure	Management
Equipment Inspection Records	25 Years	Management
Premises Inspection Records	25 Years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 Yrs from last assessment	Management
Members		
Register of Members Interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a Member	Management
Miscellaneous		
Complaints	2 Years after closure of case	Management
Information requests	2 Years after closure of case	Management
Press Releases	5 Years	Management
Public consultation: surveys & returns	5 Years	Management
Register of Officers Interests	Indefinite	Management
Reports, newsletters etc from other bodies	Retain as long as useful	Management
Personnel/Human Resources		
Application forms (interviewed- unsuccessful)	6 Months	Management
Disciplinary records	Retain for period of employment	Management
Personal files (not payroll information)	6 years after ceasing employment	Management

General correspondence will be retained as long as relevant, the minimum period is 6 months

There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. However, an annual review of all documentation should become regular practice with ephemeral items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving or transfer to the County Record Office as appropriate.