

WALSOKEN PARISH COUNCIL

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

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

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies
- Retention Schedule.

1. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Council in the course of carrying out its functions.

Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the 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 Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the council's archives and for historical research. Historically these include the Minutes of the Meetings.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The 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 and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Council's records management guidelines.

3. RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING POLICIES

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information policy
- Data Protection guidelines / Inventory of Personal Data Captured, Stored and Processed
- And with other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Council.

4. RETENTION SCHEDULE

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series 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.

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.

4.1 PLANNING PAPERS

4.11 Planning applications, decisions, appeals and associated papers – all available on the District Council website. Therefore, not required to be stored by the Council.

4.12 Structure Plans and Local Plans

These should also be retained.

4.2 RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Document Minimum Retention Period

Minute Books	Indefinite Archive County Council records
Scale of Fees and Charges	5 Years Management
Receipt and Payment a/c	7 Years
Annual Return	7 Years minimum
Receipt Books	6 years
Bank Statements	Last completed Audit
Bank Paying in Books	Last completed Audit
Cheque Books Stubs	Last completed Audit
Quotations and Tenders	12 years/Indefinite Statute of Limitations
Paid Invoices	6 years
Paid cheques	6 years Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years
Insurance Policies	6 years
Cert of Employers Liability	50 years Legal requirement
Cert of Public Liability	21 years Legal requirement
Investments	Indefinite Audit
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite Audit
General Correspondence	At Clerk's discretion (see also 4.3)
Risk Assessments	3 Years from Last Assessment Management
Register of Members Interests	Term of office + 4 years . Management
Declarations of Acceptance Term	Term of Office + 4 Years Management
Personnel/Human Resources	
Application Forms (unsuccessful)	6 Months. Management
Application Forms (successful)	Period of Employment + 6 years Management
Employment references (successful)	Period of Employment + 6 years

candidates)	Management
Disciplinary Records	Period of Employment + 6 years Management
Miscellaneous	
Complaints	1 Years after Closure Management
Information Requests	2 Years after Closure Management

4.3 CORRESPONDENCE

There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. However, an annual review of all documentation should be carried out with ephemeral items marked for destruction, and the remainder being considered for archiving or transfer to the County Record Office as appropriate. Clerk to keep electronic versions of ephemeral items and destroy as above from 1st January 2023

Date of policy: July 2023
Reviewed: August 2026