

STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

1. 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.

2. Scope

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.

3. 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 the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and he/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. Any records that are held on the Parish Council's computer will be backed up regularly to a hard drive by the Clerk.

4. Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish 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. The Clerk is expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

5. Retention of Documents

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	7 years	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Management
Paying in books	Last completed audit	Management
Quotations	7 years	Audit
Paid invoices	7 years	Audit
VAT records	7 years	Audit
Salary records	7 years	Audit
Tax & NI records	7 years	Audit
Insurance policies	Whilst valid	Audit
Cert of Employers Liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Cert of public liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit

Declarations of acceptance	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Members register of interests' book	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Complaints	1 year	Management
Routine correspondence & e-mails	6 months	Management

6. Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at Stratford District Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council minutes and are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained as stated below.

7. Disposal procedure

All documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and disposed of. The Council should not retain documents longer than is 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. This will also ensure the most efficient use of limited storage

This policy was amended by Stockton Parish Council on 19th June 2023 and will be reviewed in three years' time, at the AGM

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