

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

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1 Introduction

- a) 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.
- b) This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.
- c) It covers:
 - i. Scope;
 - ii. Responsibilities; and
 - iii. Retention Schedule.

2 Scope of the Policy

- a) 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.
- b) A small percentage of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Parish Council's archives and for historical research.

3 Responsibilities

- a) The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment.
- b) The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk, and she is required to manage the Parish 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.

4 Retention Schedule

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) The retention schedule is attached at Appendix A

Appendix A Retention of Documents Schedule

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason
Statutory, Financial and Corporate		
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts (including cashbooks)	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	7 years	Audit/management
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Management
Receipt books of all kinds	7 years	Management
Paying in books	Last completed audit	Management
Scales of fees and charges	7 years	Management
Pavilion hire (application forms, diary/record of hires)	7 years	Audit/management
Quotations and tenders	7 years	Audit/Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid invoices	7 years	Audit/VAT
VAT records	7 years	VAT
Salary records	12 years	Audit/Pension, NI & HMRC
Insurance policies & record of policies held maintained.	Whilst valid	Audit/management
Certificate of Employers Liability	40 years	Audit/management/legal (Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998)
Certificate of Public Liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit/management
Deeds, leases	Indefinite	Audit/management
Burial Authority		
Register of burials Register of purchased graves Register of grave spaces Plan of grave spaces Book of exclusive rights Grants of exclusive right of burial Notice of interments Disposal certificates – green forms or cremation certificates Register of memorials Applications for right to erect memorial	Indefinite	Archive/Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977

Employee Records		
Application forms Contracts of employment Routine employee documentation.	6 years from date of leaving (past employees) All documentation (current employees)	Personal injury claims, tribunal claims
Recruitment Records		
Application forms CV's Interview notes Supporting documents	6 months (from date of appointment)	Discrimination claim from applicants.
Planning Applications		
All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at East Herts District Council. There is no requirement to remain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Parish Council's Planning Committee minutes and are retained indefinitely		
Other Documentation		
Declarations of acceptance	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Members register of interests forms	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Complaints	1 year	Management
General information	3 months	Management
Routine correspondence & emails	6 months	Management

Disposal Procedures

To ensure there are no breaches of Data Protection regulations:

- a) any documents identified for disposal, in accordance with this policy, will be destroyed by a shredding service; and
- b) documents for disposal will not be entered into public recycling streams.

Certificates of disposal will be retained for 7 years.