

# **IDEFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Records Management & Retention Policy**

Reviewed May 2022

Adopted by Ideford Parish Council on 13 December 2018

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## **1. Document Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Parish Council records are kept in accordance with the law as advised by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). 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 that 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:

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

## **2. Information Security**

Ideford Parish Council ensures the security of all personal data. We make sure that your information is protected from unauthorised access, loss, manipulation, falsification, destruction or unauthorised disclosure. This is done through appropriate technical measures and relevant policies. We will only keep your data for the purpose it was collected for and only for as long as is necessary, after which time it will be deleted. All documents containing personal or sensitive information will be shredded prior to disposal.

## **3. 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 may be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

## **4. 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 can be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner.

Individual Employees and 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.

## **5. Relationship with existing policies**

This policy has been drawn up within the context of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policy and with other legislation or regulations (including Audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

## 6. Planning Papers

As the Parish Council no longer receives paper applications from Teignbridge District Council, any matters relating to planning will be kept as a reference for as long as the application is being dealt with. Should the application be appealed, the Council will retain electronic copies of any further correspondence that is sent to the District Council.

## 7. Retention of Documents required for the Audit of the Parish Council

How long do we keep your personal data? We will keep some records permanently if we are legally required to do so and we may keep some other records for an extended period of time. For example, it is current best practice to keep financial records for a minimum period of 8 years to support HMRC audits or provide tax information. We may have legal obligations to retain some data in connection with our statutory obligations as a public authority. The council is permitted to retain data in order to defend or pursue claims. In some cases, the law imposes a time limit for such claims (for example 3 years for personal injury claims or 6 years for contract claims). We will retain some personal data for this purpose if we believe it is necessary to be able to defend or pursue a claim. In general, we will endeavour to keep data only for as long as we need it. This means that we will delete it when it is no longer needed.

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

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.

### Minimum Retention periods (based on NALC LTN 40)

Type of Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason for Retention
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements including deposit and savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Timesheets	Last completed audit year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal Injury (Best Practice)
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management

Type of Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason for Retention
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753), Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, management
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)

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.