

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Shepton Beauchamp parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with the legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Parish Council. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Retention Schedule

Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. The policy applies to all councillors and employees.

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 system. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council who 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.

Individual Councillors may hold records in a hard copy format or electronically at home on their computers. Councillors are strongly advised to undertake 'housekeeping' on a regular basis in line with the retention schedule. On resigning from the Council, Councillors should delete all electronic records that they hold and return all hard copy documents to the Clerk. Councillors should be aware that the records they hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the GDPR Regulations.

Retention Schedule of Documents and Records

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the records which it creates in the course of its business. This policy has also been drawn up in the context of the Data Protection Act 2018 and with other legislation or regulations affecting Parish Councils including Audit and Statutes of Limitation.

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.

All documents that are no longer required for administrative purposes will be disposed of securely e.g., shredded.

All documents that require archiving to be archived with the Somerset Heritage Centre in Taunton.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, unless required earlier by legislation or additional material.

Date adopted: 18th September 2023

Date reviewed: 2nd January 2025

Next review: Annually in May

Document Type	Minimum retention period	Reason
AGENDA & MINUTES		
Agendas & reports	2 years	Management
Minutes of council meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Minutes of committee meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Minutes of annual parish meetings	Indefinite	Archive
FINANCE		
Annual Return (AGAR)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipts & payments accounts	6 years	Audit / Management
Receipt books	6 years	VAT
Bank Statements	6 years	Audit / Management
Cheque book stubs	6 years	Audit / Management
Bank paying in books	6 years	Audit / Management
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
VAT records	6 years	VAT
CIL records	6 years	Audit / Management
Banking Mandate	Until confirmation is received that updated mandate has been implemented	Management
Bank reconciliations	6 years	Audit / Management
Purchase orders	6 years	Audit / Management
Internal audit reports	6 years	Management
Precept forms	Indefinite	Audit / Management
Grant funding applications	6 years	Audit / Management
INSURANCE		
Insurance policies	While valid (<i>but see next 2 items below</i>)	Management
Insurance company names & policy numbers	Indefinite	Management
Certificates of employers' liability	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (compulsory Insurance Regulations 1998(SI.2753))
EMPLOYMENT (STAFF)		
Major employment records e.g., application form (current postholder), letter of appointment, contract, references	6 years after the period of employment	Management
Application forms (unsuccessful candidates)	9 months	Management
Disciplinary records	6 years after the period of employment	Management
Appraisals	6 years after the period of employment	Management
Timesheets	2 years	Audit / Management
Wages / salary records / overtime, expenses etc.	6 years	Superannuation
Statutory sick records, pay, calculations, certificates etc.	6 years after the period of employment	Management
Annual Leave records	Period of employment + 5 years	Management
Statutory maternity records, calculations, certificates etc.	3 years after tax year in which maternity period ended	Management
Income Tax and National Insurance records	6 years	Management
COUNCILLOR RECORDS		
Declarations of acceptance of office	Permanent	Management / Archive
Members register of interests	Permanent	Management / Archive
ALLOTMENTS		
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Allotment application forms	Duration of plot + 2 years	Management
Allotment agreements	Duration of plot + 2 years	Audit / Management
Financial records relating to allotments	6 years	Audit / Management
PLANNING		
Planning applications	Until decision published	Available indefinitely on somerset county website
Appeal decision notice	Until development completed, maybe longer as may set a precedent	Planning and enforcement

Planning applications where refused, plans and decision letters	Until period in which appeal can be made expires	Planning and enforcement
Structure plans, Local Plans and similar documents	As long as in force	Planning and enforcement
MISCELLANEOUS		
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Correspondence from solicitors	Indefinite	Management
Asset Register	Indefinite	Audit / Management
Risk Assessment forms	5 years from last assessment If COSHH related indefinite	Management
General correspondence	While relevant to significant local issues	Management
100 Club records	Indefinite	Audit / Management
Quotations & Tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Speed Indicator Device downloads	As long as relevant to road traffic issues	Management
Complaints	2 years after closure	Management
Information requests	1 year following completion of request	Data Protection Act 2018
Newsletters, surveys	As long as useful	Management / Archive
Playground Inspection records (monthly & annually)	20 years	Management