**NARBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

**RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY**

Adopted 1st March 2021

Reviewed 10th May 2023

Narborough 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. 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. 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 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 in accordance with the regulatory environment. 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. Resigning Councillors will be asked to sign a declaration to confirm compliance. 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 record series 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. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

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

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| **Document Type** | **Minimum Retention Period** | **Reason** |
| **Agendas and Minutes** | | |
| Approved minutes | Indefinite | Archive |
| Notes of minutes taken at meetings | Until minutes are approved | Management |
| Agendas and supporting documentation | 2 years | Management |
| **Finance** | | |
| Income and expenditure accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| Annual return | Indefinite | Archive |
| Paid invoices | 6 years | VAT |
| VAT records | 6 years | VAT |
| Bank statements | 6 years | Audit/Management |
| Paying in and receipt books | 6 years | Audit/Management/VAT |
| Cheque stubs | 6 years | Audit/Management |
| Banking mandate | Until confirmation is received that updated mandate has been implemented | Management |
| **Insurance** | | |
| Insurance policies | 5 years | Management |
| Certificates of employers’ liability | 40 years | Limitation period |

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| **Employment (Staff)** | | |
| Major employment records  e.g. application form (current postholder), letter of appointment, contract | 6 years after the period of employment | Management |
| Application forms  (unsuccessful candidates) | 6 months | Management |
| Disciplinary records | Period of employment plus 6 months | Management |
| Appraisals | Period of employment plus 6 months | Management |
| Time sheets | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| PAYE records (payroll) | 12 years | Superannuation |
| **Councillor Records** | | |
| Declarations of acceptance of office | Term of office | Management |
| Members register of interests | Term of office | Management |
| **Miscellaneous** | | |
| Quotations and tenders | 12 years | Limitation period |
| Title deeds, leases, agreements and contracts | Indefinite | Audit/Management |
| Asset register | Indefinite | Audit/Management |
| Accident report forms | 3 years | Management/Limitation period |
| Complaints | 2 years after closure | Management |
| Information requests | 2 years after closure | Management |
| Newsletters, press releases | As long as useful | Management |

**General correspondence:** this will be retained for as long as is relevant, the minimum period is 1 year. An annual review will be carried out and items that have reached their destruction date will be destroyed or considered for archiving.

**Planning applications:** these are available at Breckland District Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates at parish level. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Parish Council minutes which are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained until the Parish Council has made a recommendation to Breckland District Council.