



NEWTON POPPLEFORD & HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Newton Popleford & Harpford 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
- Relationships with existing policies
- Retention Schedule

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 (in physical or electronic format) which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (permanently or for a limited period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities.

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 records 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 will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner.

Individual staff and employees 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.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information Policy
- Data Protection Policy/Publication Scheme

Other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

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.

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.

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

PLANNING PAPERS

Permission Granted

All papers should be retained until the development has been completed to allow the Council to check that the development proceeds in accordance with the terms of the permission.

Appeal Decisions

All papers should be retained indefinitely as they may be required should there be longer term implications (for example, the decision creates a precedent for other developments in the locality).

Permission Refused

All papers should be retained until the period in which an appeal can be made has expired. If a resulting appeal is dismissed, the documentation should be retained in case further applications relating to the same site are submitted.

Structure Plans and Local Plans should also be retained.

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCIL

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minutes & Correspondence		
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	Permanent	Archive
Agendas	Indefinite	Archive
Correspondence & papers on important local issues & activities	Indefinite	Archive
Routine correspondence, papers & e-mails	As long as useful (with annual review) *	Management
Finance & Payroll		
Scale of Fees and Charges	5 years	Management
Receipt and Payment accounts	Permanent	Archive
Accounts/Annual Financial Return	Permanent	Archive
Receipt Books	6 years	VAT
Bank Statements (including deposit/savings accounts)	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Cheque Book Stubs	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Budgetary Control Papers	2 years + current	Audit
Quotations and Tenders	12 years/Indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
VAT Records	6 years	VAT
Payroll Records	12 years	Superannuation
Timesheets	Last completed Audit year	Audit
NI Records/P60s	Indefinite	Archive
Insurance Policies		
Certificate of Employer's Liability	50 years	Legal requirement
Certificate of Public Liability	21 years	Legal requirement
Insurance Claim Records	7 years after all obligations are concluded (allowing for claimant to reach age of 25)	Legal requirement
Policy renewal records & correspondence	While valid	Management
General Management		
Investments	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit/ Management/Archive
Members' allowances	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Policies and procedures	While valid	Management
For Halls, Centres and Recreation Grounds, Pavilion		
Applications to hire	6 years	VAT
Lettings diaries	6 years	VAT
Copies of invoices to hirers	6 years	VAT
Contracts/Terms of agreement	6 years	Management

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Allotments		
Registers and Plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Tenancy Agreements	6 years	Management
Cemeteries		
Registers of Burials	Permanent	Management/Archive
Registers of Purchased Graves	Indefinite	Management
Registers/plans of Grave Spaces	Indefinite	Management
Registers of Memorials	Indefinite	Management
Applications for Interment	Indefinite	Management
Applications for right to erect memorials	Indefinite	Management
Disposal Certificates	Indefinite	Management
Copy certifications of grant of exclusive right of burial	Indefinite	Management
General Correspondence	6 years	Management
Health & Safety		
Accident Books (injuries to Adults)	25 years from closure	Management
Accident Books (injuries to Children)	25 years from closure	Management
Equipment Inspection Records	25 years	Management
Premises Inspection Records	25 years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 years from last assessment	Management
Members		
Register of Members' Interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a Member	Management
Legal Issues	Indefinite	Management
Miscellaneous		
Complaints	5 years after closure of case	Management
Deeds/Leases	Permanent	Archive
Press Releases	6 years	Management
Public consultation: surveys & returns	5 years	Management
Register of Officers' Interests	Indefinite	Management
Reports, newsletters, etc. from other bodies	Retain as long as useful	Management
Other Legal Documents	Indefinite	Management
Personnel/Human Resources		
Application forms (unsuccessful candidates)	6 months	Management
Disciplinary records	Retain for period of employment	Management
Personal/personnel files (not payroll information)	6 years after ceasing employment	Management

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Planning		
Applications - All consultative documents including plans	Not retained	Held by Planning Authority
Applications upon which Council has commented - all consultative documents including plans.	12 months	Management
Historic Planning Documents	Indefinitely	Management

There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. However, an annual review of all documentation should be carried out with ephemeral items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving. Each archived item should be discrete and clearly labelled.

It is recommended that items requiring permanent preservation are transferred to the custody of the Devon Archives and Local Studies Service on a regular basis.