

HODNET PARISH COUNCIL

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Hodnet 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.

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 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 systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Personal Data Management & Audit Policy
- Subject Access Policy
- Privacy Policy
- With other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

Retention Schedule

The Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates in the course of its business. There is a clear need to retain documentation for audit purposes, staff management, tax liabilities, and the eventuality of legal disputes and legal proceedings. The schedule lays down the minimum length of time which the record needs to be retained for audit and other purposes and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

Most legal proceedings are governed by 'the Limitations Acts' which state that legal claims may not be commenced after a specific period. The specific period varies, depending on the type of claim in question. If a type of legal proceeding fall into two or more categories, the documentation will be kept for the longer of the limitation period. As there is no limitation period in respect of trust, the Council will retain all trust deeds and schemes and other similar documentation.

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

Retention Schedule

For Audit Purposes

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Signed minutes of council meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	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
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 and postage	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Wages / Payroll records	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date from when insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employer's 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)

For Legal Purposes

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years
Sums recoverable	6 years
Leases	12 years
Personal injury	3 years
To recover land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

Other documentation not mentioned in the Retention Schedule

Information from other bodies (e.g. planning applications, circulars etc. from Shropshire Council, SALC, NALC and other bodies) – such information should be retained for as long as it is useful and relevant.

Documents relating to staff – should be kept securely and in accordance with the Personal Data Management & Audit Policy and General Data Protection Regulations which provide that personal data in relation to staff should not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held. However, after an employment relationship has ended, the Parish Council will need to retain and access staff records for former staff the purpose of giving references, payment of tax, national insurance contributions and pensions, and in respect of any related legal claim made against the Parish Council.

Correspondence – if related to audit matters and/or legal proceedings correspondence should be kept for the appropriate period specified in the schedule. Other correspondence (unless relating to staff) should be retained for as long as it is useful and relevant normally no more than 3 months.

Adopted on 3rd May 2018

Review Date May 2020