

Eldon Parish Council

27th March 2018

Retention of Documents Policy

Report of Clerk

Introduction

The efficient management of its records is necessary for Eldon Parish Council 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 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

Eldon 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 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.

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. The new General Data Protection Regulations which come into force at the end of May 2018 will also have an impact in relation to data held by the Council.

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.

Disposal procedures

All documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be disposed of appropriately and emails permanently deleted.

Retention of Documents

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason
<u>Administrative</u>		
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive to DCC after 6 yrs
Draft Minutes	Until minutes approved	Common practice
Reports etc.	Until no longer administrative need	Common practice
Register of Electors	While current	Common practice
<u>Financial records</u>		
Annual accounts	Indefinite	Archive (DCC after 2yrs)
Annual return	Indefinite	Archive (DCC after 2yrs)
Bank statements	6 years	Audit/management
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Common practice
Paying-in books	Last completed audit	Common practice
Quotations	6 years	Audit
Paid invoices	6 years	Audit/VAT
Sent invoices	6 years	Audit/VAT
VAT records	6 years	Audit/VAT
Salary records	6 years	Audit
Tax & NI records	6 years	Audit
Insurance policies	6 years	Audit/good practice
Assets register	6 years	Audit
Cert of employers' liability	6 years	Audit/legal
Cert of public liability	6 years	Audit/legal
<u>Legal documents</u>		
Leases/deeds	Indefinite	Audit/Management
Agreements/contracts	6 years after cease	Audit/Management
Byelaws etc.	Indefinite	Legal

Councillor Information

Declaration of acceptance of Office	Term of office plus 2 years	Common practice
Register of Member's interest	Term of office plus 2 years	Common practice
Members allowances register	6 years	Audit/legal
Code of conduct complaints	Term of office plus 2 years	Common practice

Personnel Information

Personnel files	6 years	Audit/Management
Recruitment – successful	1 year	Discrimination Acts
Recruitment – unsuccessful	1 year	Discrimination Acts

Other Information

Complaints about Council	2 years after conclusion	Common practice
FOI requests	2 years after conclusion	Common practice
General information	While current plus 3 months	Common practice
Routine correspondence & emails	While current plus 3 months	Common practice

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at the DCC Planning portal. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Parish Council minutes and these are retained indefinitely.

RECOMMENDATION

The above policy is **RECOMMENDED** for adoption. The policy may need to be revised in the light of the General Data Protection General Regulations 2018 or advice received from the Council's Data Protection Officer when appointed. In some cases it may be considered prudent to deposit some documents for longer term retention in the County Council Archives.

Tom Bolton
Clerk to the Council