

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL
RECORDS MANAGEMENT & RETENTION POLICY

Document Reference – BPC_POL33

Version History & Change Control

Version	Release Date	Distribution	Notes	Adopted?	Date Adopted
0.1	2 nd March 2016	Finance Committee	For review and adoption if approved		
1.0	3 rd March 2016	Full Council	For adoption at Full Council meeting 8th March 2016		

Document Sign Off and Adoption

Signed off for Adoption by Councillor 1:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signed off for Adoption by Councillor 2:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Adoption Witnessed by the Clerk to Bearsted Parish Council:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Document Purpose

This document describes the Parish Council's policy for records management and retention.

The 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. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, parish councils are required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which the parish council creates in the course of its business

This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies
- Planning Papers
- Retention of documents

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.

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 timely.

Individual Staff, Employees & Councillors 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

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

PLANNING PAPERS

- **Permission Granted**

All papers 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 should be retained indefinitely as it may be required should there be longer term implications e.g. 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 result.

- Structure Plans and Local Plans should also be retained.

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCILS

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.

Document	Min Retention Period	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Scale of Fees and Charges	5 Years	Management
Receipt and Payment a/c	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt Books	6 years	VAT
Bank Statements	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Bank Paying in Books	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Cheque Books Stubs	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Quotations and Tenders	12 years/Indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Wages books	12 years	Super-annuation
Insurance Policy	While valid	Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit/Management
Title Deeds, leases,		

Agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Members allowances	6 years Limitations	Statute of

For Halls, Centres and Recreation Grounds

- application to hire)
 - lettings diaries) 6 years
 - copies of bills to hirers)
- VAT

Postage Books	6 years Limitations	Statute of
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Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
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There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. However, an annual review of all documentation should become regular practice with ephemeral items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving or transfer to the County Record Office as appropriate.