

BURSTALL PARISH COUNCIL

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Burstall Parish Council recognises the efficient and effective management of its records is essential to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to assist in the satisfactory management of public business by the Parish Council. This Policy provides a framework through which this effective management and retention of public records can be achieved and properly audited.

Scope

This Policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council. Records are defined as all those documents which relate to the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its communications, transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

Responsibilities

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for maintaining this Policy is the Clerk and Proper Officer of 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 stored and retrieved easily, appropriately and timely.

The Clerk and Proper Officer must ensure that the records for which they are responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If the Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the parish records, they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual Councillors are strongly advised to undertake 'weeding' and 'housekeeping' on a regular basis. On resigning from the Council Councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they may hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The Parish Council must also ensure its acts within the General Data Protection Regulations.

Retention Schedule

The Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing types of records which it creates or holds 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 Clerk will be expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

The retention schedule refers to all Parish Council records irrespective of the media in which they are stored.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIODS

| <u>Document or Record</u> | <u>Minimum Retention Period</u> | <u>Reason</u> |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <u>Minutes and Correspondence</u> | | |
| Signed Minutes of Council Meetings | Indefinite | Archive |
| Correspondence & papers on important local Issues | Indefinite | Archive |
| Routine correspondence, papers & emails | 1 year | Audit |
| <u>Finance & Payroll</u> | | |
| Receipt & Payment accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| Annual Return & Audited Accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| All Bank Statements | 6 years | Audit |
| Bank Paying-in Books | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Cheque Book Stubs | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Correspondence relating to audit matters | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Budgetary Control Papers | 2 years + Current year | Audit |
| Quotations and Tenders | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) |
| Receipt Books of all Kinds | Indefinite | Archive |
| Paid Invoices | 6 years | VAT |
| Paid Cheques | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) |
| VAT Records | 6 years (but 20 years on rents) | VAT |
| Investments | Indefinite | Audit and Management |
| Payroll Records | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| <u>Insurance Policies</u> | | |
| Certificate of Employers Liability | 50 years | Future Claims |
| Certificate of Public Liability | 21 years | Future Claims |
| Other Insurance Policies | While valid or a claim can be made | Management and Legal Proceedings |
| Insurance Claim Records | 7 years after all obligations concluded | Management and Legal Proceedings |
| Policy Renewal Records & correspondence | While valid | Management |

General Management

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| Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts | Indefinite | Audit and Management |
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Allotments

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| Register, plans, receipt books, scale of charges | Indefinite | Audit and Management |
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Health & Safety

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| Accident Books (Injury to Adults) | 50 years from closure | Management and Legal Proceedings |
| Accident Books (Injury to Children) | 50 years from closure | Management and Legal Proceedings |
| Equipment Inspection Records | 25 years | Management |
| Premises Inspection Records | 25 years | Management |
| Risk Assessments | 3 years from last assessment | Management |

Members

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|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Register of Members Interests | 18 months after individual ceases to be a Member | Management |
| Register of Officers Interests | Indefinite | Archive |
| Member's Allowances Register | 6 years | Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) |

Miscellaneous

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| Complaints | 2 years after closure of case | Management |
| Press Releases | 5 years | Management |
| Public Consultation – surveys & returns | 5 years | Management |
| Reports, newsletters etc from other bodies | Retain as long as useful | Management |

Personnel/Human Resources

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| Application Forms (interviewed – unsuccessful) | 6 months | Management |
| Disciplinary Records | Retain for period of employment | Management |
| Personal Files (not payroll information) | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |

General correspondence will be retained as long as relevant, the minimum period being 1 year.

An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and all items that have reached their deletion or destruction date being deleted/destroyed and the remainder being considered for archiving.

Review date: This Policy will be reviewed annually

Approved and adopted at the Burstall Parish Council Meeting held on: 12 November 2025

Minute No: 504(iii)/2526