

MOUNTNESSING PARISH COUNCIL
Retention of Documents and Records Management
Adopted: June 2018
Readopted: May 2023

Mountnessing 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 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 may 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 system in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Parish Clerk. 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 reasonable time. Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Councils records management guidelines.

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.

Record Management Table

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	No limit	Legal requirement under the Local Government Act 1972, sch 12 para 41
Agendas	No limit	To support the minutes
Correspondence & papers on important local issues & activities	6 years	For reference
Invoices	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Paid cheques	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
VAT records	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Archive accounts/financial annual return.	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Receipt books of all kinds	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections

Bank statements	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Bank paying-in books	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Cheque book stubs	Ten years	Potential for VAT inspections
Audit budgetary control papers	5 years	Recommendation from SLCC
Quotations and Tenders	2 years	Reference only
Routine correspondence papers and emails	2 years	Reference only
Contracts	Six years after the contract has ended	Should a claim be brought under that contract
Hand written notes from meetings	One year	These are not a legal record of the meeting
Insurance policies	21 years	Should a claim arise
Insurance claim records	7 years after all obligations are concluded (allowing the claimant to reach the age of 25)	Should a claim arise
Risk assessment forms	3 years	Should a claim arise
Equipment report inspections	25 years from closure	Should a claim arise
Timesheets	2 years	For a comparison of sickness and absence
Title deeds, leases, agreements and correspondence	Whilst the council owns or occupies the land	Not required after the council is no longer owning or occupying the land
Social media messages	3 months	Only relevant whilst being dealt with.
Allotment plot holders register	1 year	Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required
Members register of interests	Destroy after member ceases to be a councillor	Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required.
Press releases	1 year	Reference only
Surveys	Until project completed	Only current records required. No need to keep data longer than required.
Newsletters etc. from other bodies	Retain as long as useful	Used for reference purposes only and advice.
Planning applications	Not retained past one year after development has either been completed or refused.	Held by planning authority
Parish Council Newsletters	Three years	Reference only

		Three copies kept for archive
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