Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Documents, Records and Correspondence Policy

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure that records are stored safely, documents are filed and kept for the time required and correspondence is circulated or replied to as soon as is practicable.

Records

Records refer to official records such as Full Council Minutes and Land Ownership deeds. All records prior to 1986 are filed in the Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.
Records since then are stored in a fireproof cabinet in the Parish Council Office.

Documents

Documents refer to other papers such as on the attached list. Speldhurst Parish Council (SPC) uses the guidelines for document retention as set out by the National Association of Councils (NALC) refer LTN40.

Correspondence

Emails have changed the way organisations and people correspond and the volume has increased inordinately. Content of emails varies from direct enquiries to circulars, but the majority are from organisations such as County and Borough Councils who circulate information, not all of which is relevant to us.
Consequently all emails have to be reviewed and a decision made on whether an immediate reply is warranted, an acknowledgement sent or whether it is pertinent to circulate for Councillors to read.
The time it takes to respond to a resident can vary depending on the urgency of the enquiry and if advice is required. If advice is needed then an acknowledgement should be sent and the relevant Committee Chairman will be normally be copied in.
All emails are filed with the exception of circulars.
All decisions on the above are at the Clerk's discretion.
It should be noted that the reading and filing of correspondence can take a minimum of one hour per day of the Clerk's time.