

# **BARDON MILL PARISH COUNCIL RETENTION/DISPOSAL POLICY**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act") provides the citizen, who could be anyone anywhere including companies, with the right to request information from the council. The only requirement is that the council must **HOLD** the information/record, which is the subject of the request. 'Hold' does not mean that the council either initiated the information or that the information relates to the council's functions or operations. The information could be information that another organisation has initiated or produced, and forwarded to the council for "information purposes".
- 1.2 There are statutory requirements for certain information or records (termed "information") to be kept for certain periods of time, e.g. council minutes, but usually the retention of such information is at the discretion of the council.
- 1.3 The destruction of information has to be undertaken by the Council and also the Council has to demonstrate conformity with the policy in the event of a challenge by someone requesting information.
- 1.4 With the greater use of E-Government and experiences of the implementation of the Act, this policy is likely to be revised but should in any event be reviewed by the Council's Proper Officer to ensure that it is robust for the purposes of the Act.
- 1.5 This policy has been drawn up within the context of:
  - Freedom of Information Policy
  - Legislation and Regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

## **2. RETENTION**

- 2.1 Each record of information will entail identifying when the retention period of each record is due to expire and taking immediate action to ensure its destruction in a proper and secure manner
- 2.2 If the retention of the information is justifiable, the Proper Officer will consider whether the retained information falls within a category included in the Publication Scheme or whether the Information is capable of being included as a further category and the Publication Scheme amended as appropriate.

## **3. DESTRUCTION**

- 3.1 Upon the information reaching the expiry date for retention, the Proper Officer shall ensure that ALL copies of that information are permanently destroyed. Where the information is held in more than one media the information must be removed from all the council's record systems i.e. paper copies should be shredded and electronic copies must be completely deleted from any memory source or other media.

## **4. STORAGE OF INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Clerk's home will be the main location for records/documents until such time that they are moved to archives.
- 4.2 If records have to be archived, the Council's Proper Officer shall arrange for documentation to be stored at Woodhorn Records Office which is accessible to the public.

Type of record	Minimum Retention Period	Notes
Signed annual council and committee minutes	Indefinite	Clerk hold last year, archive remainder to Woodhorn.
Agendas	Two years electronically	
Annual Accounts and Annual Return	Indefinite	
Councillors' declarations of office	Term of office + 1 year	<b>but</b> if minutes do not survive, preserve
Register of Interests	Held by NCC	Link from PC to NCC website
Application for co-option to the Council	Keep successful candidate until 1 year after resigning	Immediately destroy other applications once successful candidate co-opted
Register of electors	3 years	<b>but</b> if annotated with extra information, review
Byelaws and orders	Indefinite	Archive for security
Title deeds	Indefinite	Archive for security
Contracts, wayleaves, agreements or other legal documents other than title deeds	Indefinite	Archive for security
Insurance policies	3 years	Hold by Clerk
Certificate of Employers Liability	40 years	Archive
Certificate of Public Liability	40 years	Archive
Property registers	Indefinite	Hold by Clerk
Maps, plans and surveys of property owned by the council or meeting	Indefinite	Hold by Clerk
Receipt and Payment Accounts	7 years	
Budget information/precept	7 years	
Bank Statements, including savings accounts	7 years	
Bank paying-in books	7 years	
Cheque books stubs	7 years	
Quotations and tenders	7 years	
Paid Invoices	7 years	
VAT records	7 years	

PAYE/Payroll records	7 years	
Grant applications	7 years	
Personnel records (including ex-employees)	Indefinite	Hold by Clerk
Employee Applications	As soon as position filled	Destroy unless needed for complaint
Routine correspondence and papers	6 months minimum	Hold by Clerk then destroy at Clerk's discretion
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	5 years	Hold by Clerk then destroy at Clerk's discretion
Parish Produced Documentation	1 year	Archive
Consultation Documents	3 years	Hold by Clerk then destroy
Planning applications	1 year	Held by Clerk
Maps created under the provisions of the Rights of Way Act 1932	Indefinite	Hold by Clerk
Community magazines or newsletters	As long as useful/relevant	Hold by Clerk - one copy of every issue
Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other organisations	Review annually	Hold by Clerk
Electronic documents	As per above	Clerk to back up electronic media on an external hard drive and remove documents annually as per paper versions
Emails	As long as relevant	Delete when no longer required