Kingsclere Parish Council Data Retention Policy

Reviewed PPP October24 no amendments.
Adopted at the Annual Meeting 19th May 2025

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.
This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.
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 the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and the Clerk is required to manage the Council's records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner.

Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates 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 is expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.
The National Association of Local Councils has provided a general list of documentation / records and recommended retention periods as maybe required by law, general convention or by the council's need. This is at Appendix A.

Disposal Action

Disposal actions fall into three basic categories:

i. Destruction (D), where records should be destroyed after the specified number of years.
ii. Review (R) records marked for review are where there may no longer be a legal requirement to retain, but where the decision to destroy is not clear and therefore requiring an assessment of their continuing administrative or historic worth. This decision should be made by Officers of appropriate seniority who are familiar with the content of the record and its likely future usefulness.
The content of general subject based filing systems should be regularly reviewed in line with the Schedule to remove or delete correspondence, circulars and other papers which are no longer useful. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on The Management of Records Under S46 of The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that 'as a general rule, files should be closed after five years and, if action continues, a further file should be opened'. The destruction of closed files should take place in accordance with the guidelines.
The basic guideline for the retention of general correspondence is three years, however at the end of this period, it may be necessary to review the contents of the correspondence and retain longer where an action arises or until its administrative use is concluded.
iii. Permanent (P), these records need to be retained permanently for statutory reasons or are deemed to be worthy of long-term retention because of their administrative or historical significance, this may include record types that succinctly record the past policies and activities of the authority.

Disposal Procedures

All documents that are no longer required for administrative purposes will be shredded and disposed of.

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council minutes and are retained indefinitely.

Appendix A

Retention of Documents Required for the Audit of Parish Councils

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fee and charges	5 years	Management
Receipt and payment account (s)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements, including deposit / savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	12 years / indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Paid cheques	6 years	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage, and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, management
Members allowance register	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations

For Halls, Centre, Recreation Grounds

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Application to hire	6 years	VAT
Lettings diaries	6 years	VAT
Copies of bills to hires	6 years	VAT
Record of tickets issued	6 years	VAT

For Allotments

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, management

Policy Adoption History
As adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 30th April 2018
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Reviewed and approved OM 25th July 2022
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