

FARLAM PARISH COUNCIL

Retention of Documents Policy

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. It covers:

Scope Responsibilities Retention Schedule 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 (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 s/he 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.

Minute books will be kept forever. These are legal documents and must not be destroyed. If the need arises the County Council can archive them.

Title deeds, leases, agreements etc. will be kept whilst the Council owns/occupies property/land. These will be held at the Council offices and/or with the Council's solicitor.

Salaries details will be kept for 12 years where there is superannuation. Inland Revenue and VAT papers will be kept for 8 years. Annual returns and former statements of accounts will be kept indefinitely. Audit papers will be kept for five years. Insurance documents, Certificates of Employers Liability and Public Liability will be kept as required by law.

Documents of historical interest will be retained indefinitely.

Documents relating to controversial issues will be retained indefinitely.

For ease of reference retention periods for material, together with the reason for retention, is set out below.

Retention of Documents

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	8 years	Audit/management
Cheque book stubs	6 years	VAT
Paying in books	6 years	VAT
Quotations	12 years/indefinite	Statute of limitations
Paid invoices	8 years	Audit/VAT
VAT records	8 years	Audit/VAT
Salary records	12 years	Superannuation
Tax & NI records	7 years	Audit
Insurance policies	Whilst valid	Audit
Cert of Employers Liability	7 Years	Audit
Cert of public liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit
Deeds, leases	Indefinite	Audit
Declarations of acceptance	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Policies and Procedures	Until Superseded	Management
Members register of interests'	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Complaints	1 Year	Management
General Information	6 months	Management
Routine Correspondence & Emails	6 months	Management
Personnel Records		
Application Forms	Duration of Employment	Management
References obtained from Third Party	1 year	Management
Sickness Records	3 years	Management
Annual Leave Records	2 years	Management
Unpaid Leave/Special Leave Records	2 years	Management
Annual Appraisal/Assessment Records	5 years	Management
Promotion, Transfer, 'Training & Disciplinary Records	1 year from end of Employment	Management
References given or details retained to enable reference to be provided	5 years from reference or end of employment	Management
Summary or record of service e.g. name position held, dates of employment	10 years from end of employment	Management
Records relating to accident or injury at work	3 years	Management

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available from the District Council. There is therefore 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. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained as stated above.

Disposal procedures: all documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be burned or cross-shredded (where possible) and disposed of.

This policy was last reviewed on 16th May 2018