

Hatherton & Walgherton Parish Council

Record Management Policy

The Hatherton and Walgherton 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
- Relationships with existing policies
- Planning Papers
- Disposal
- 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 records management is the Clerk to the Parish Council. The Clerk will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and timely. The Clerk must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, are maintained and disposed of in accordance with this Parish Council's records management policy.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If the Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the parish records they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual councillors are strongly advised to undertake "culling" and "housekeeping" on a regular basis. On resigning from the council councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 / UK General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and other legislation pertaining to the Parish Council.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of other Parish Council policies including the Publication Scheme. Records shall be managed in accordance with the Limitation Act 1980, the Data Protection Act 2018 / the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Freedom of Information Act

2000, the Lord Chancellor’s Code of Practice on the Management of Records and with other legislation or regulations (including audit) affecting the Parish Council.

Planning Papers

All Planning Applications and Appeals (both Granted and Refused), including all related documentation are held online by the Local Planning Authority. There is no requirement for the Parish Council to hold this information. The Parish Council will retain minutes of Planning Meetings in accordance with the rules for all other meetings.

Disposal

There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. An annual review of all documentation should be carried out with short lived items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving or transfer to the County Record Office as appropriate. Destruction of paper copies is via a shredder, and computer held electronic data is permanently deleted, by overwriting the file data three times and then deleting the file.

Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the records 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 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. The retention schedule refers to records regardless of the media in which they are stored. See below:

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
Agendas	Indefinite	Archive
Financial Reports	Indefinite	Archive
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Papers on important local issues and activities	Retain as long as useful	Management
Correspondence relating to Audit matters	Last completed Audit Year	Audit
Bank Statements	Last completed Audit Year	Audit
Cash Book	6 Years	Audit
Cheque Book Stubs	6 Years	Audit
Audit Bank Paying in Stubs	6 Years	Audit
Quotations and Tenders	12 years/indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid Invoices	6 Years	Audit
VAT Records	6 Years	Audit
Salary Records	12 years	Statute of Limitations

Tax & NI Records	12 years	Statute of Limitations
Insurance Policies	While valid	Management
Certificate of Employers Liability	50 years	Legal Requirement
Certificate of Public Liability	21 years	Legal Requirement
Declarations of Acceptance of Office	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Register of Members Interests	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Complaints	1 year	Management
Policies and Procedures	While Valid	Management
Routine Correspondence and Emails	3 months or as soon as they are dealt with and closed	Management
Public Consultation Surveys and Returns	5 Years	Management

Adopted: 29th March 2021
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