

Bathampton Parish Council – Retention of Documents Policy

Introduction:

Bathampton 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 Bathampton Parish Council while carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by Bathampton 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 Bathampton Parish Council records may be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Councils archives and for historical research.

Responsibilities:

Bathampton 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 this policy is the Clerk.

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. Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with Bathampton Parish Council records management guidelines.

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 during 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.

Planning Applications:

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available from Bath & Northeast Somerset 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.

Retention of Documents Schedule

The retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

| Document | Minimum Retention Period | Reason |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Minutes | | |
| Minutes of Council meetings | Indefinite | Archive |
| Minutes of committee meetings | Indefinite | Archive |
| Employment | | |
| Staff employment contracts | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |
| Staff payroll information | 3 years | Management |
| Staff references | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |
| Application forms (interviewed – unsuccessful) | 6 months maximum (destroy) | Management |
| Application forms (interviewed – successful) | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |
| Disciplinary files | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |
| Staff appraisals | 6 years after ceasing employment | Management |
| Finance | | |
| Scales of fees and charges | 6 years | Management |
| Receipt and payment accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| Bank statements | 6 years | Audit |
| Cheque book stubs | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Paid invoices | 6 years | VAT |
| Paid cheques | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 |
| Payroll records | 6 years + current year | HMRC |
| Petty cash accounts | 6 years | VAT |
| Insurance | | |
| Insurance policies | 6 years after policy end | Management |
| Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees | 6 years after policy end | Management |
| Certificates for Public Liability | 6 years after policy end | Management |
| Insurance claim records | 6 years after policy end | Management |
| Health and Safety | | |
| Accident books | 3 years from date of last entry | Statutory |
| Risk assessment | 3 years | Management |
| Play equipment inspection reports | 21 years | Insurance claims |
| General Management | | |
| Councillors contact details | Duration of membership | Management |
| Lease agreements | 12 years from termination date of the lease. | (Limitation Act 1980) |
| Contracts | 6 years from termination date of the contract | (Limitation Act 1980) |
| Email messages | At end of useful life | Management |
| Consent forms | 5 years | Management |
| GDPR Security Compliance form | Duration of membership | Management |

Approved and adopted by Bathampton Parish Council: 18th January 2024, Minute Ref:2024/009.
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