

RETENTION GUIDELINES FOR TATHAM PARISH COUNCIL RECORDS

The Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of records is necessary to comply with 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 he/she 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.

Retention of Documents

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason	Action
Minute Books	Indefinite		Archive
Annual Audited Accounts	Indefinite		Archive

Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	6 years	Audit Destroy
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Management Destroy
Paying in books	Last completed audit	Management Destroy
Quotations	6 years	Audit Destroy
Paid invoices	6 years	Audit/VAT Destroy
VAT records	6 years	VAT Destroy
Salary records	6 years	Audit Destroy
Tax & NI records	12 years	Audit Destroy
Insurance policies	Whilst valid	Audit Destroy
Cert of Employers Liability	40 years	Audit/legal Destroy
Cert of public liability	40 years	Audit/legal Destroy
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit Preserve
Deeds, leases	Indefinite	Archive
Register of Electors	Once updated	Management Destroy
CLRs Declaration of Office	4 years	Management Destroy
Risk Assessments	Once superseded	Management Destroy
Members interests	Term of office	Management Destroy
General Information	12 months	Management Destroy

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at Lancaster City 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. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained as stated below.

Complaints	1 year	Management Destroy
General information	3 months	Management Destroy
Routine correspondence & e-mails	6 months	Management Destroy

Disposal procedures:

all hard copy documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and disposed of.

All electronic documents should be deleted permanently from the medium where they are stored (e.g. hard drives, websites).

All items held that have not reached their retention expiry date will be held by the Clerk as hard copies or electronically on a secure hard drive. All items passed on to the Archive will be stored securely at a site agreed by the Parish Council.

If further clarification is required on documents listed above or other documentation, the Lancashire County Council Archives guidelines will be consulted by the Parish Council or the LCC Archives Department itself.

Adopted on 21st September 2023

Reviewed March 2026