

Great Aycliffe Town Council



DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

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DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

Introduction

- 1 The guidelines set out in this document supports the Town Council's Data Protection Policy, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, and assist the Council in its compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other associated legislation.
- 2 It is important that the Council has in place arrangements for the retention and disposal of documents necessary for the adequate management of services in undertaking its responsibilities. This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the retention of documents and sets out the requirements for the disposal of documents. However, it is important to note that this is a live document and will be updated on a regular basis.
- 3 Great Aycliffe Town Council will ensure that information is not kept for longer than is necessary to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, and will retain the minimum amount of information that it requires to carry out its functions and the provision of services, whilst adhering to any legal or statutory requirements.

Aims and Objectives

- 4 It is recognised that up to date, reliable and accurate information is a vital to support the work that the Council do and the services that we provide to our residents. This document will help us to:
 - Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the Council to operate and provide services to the public.
 - Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
 - Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily. This will assist them as they carry out their daily duties, or if searching for information requested under the Freedom of Information Act.
 - Ensure personal and sensitive data is destroyed timely and securely.
 - Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations.

Scope

- 5 For the purpose of this policy, 'documents' includes electronic, microfilm, microfiche and paper records.
- 6 Where storage is by means of paper records, originals rather than photocopies should be retained where possible

Standards

- 7 The Council will make every effort to ensure that it meets the following standards of good practice:
- Adhere to legal requirements for the retention of information as specified in the Retention Schedule at Annex A. This document provides a framework for good practice requirements for retaining information.
 - Personal staff information will be retained in locked filing cabinets within the Corporate Office and access to these documents will only be by authorised personnel.
 - Any Manager or Officer who is responsible for personal data will ensure that the data is retained in locked filing cabinets and electronic data will have security measures put in place.
 - If any personal data is to be emailed to another person, HR or Occupational Health it will be password protected and the password will be sent separately.
 - Appropriately dispose of information that is no longer required.
 - Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that confidential and sensitive information is securely destroyed.
 - Information about unidentifiable individuals is permitted to be held indefinitely for historical, statistical or research purposes e.g. Equalities data.
 - Wherever possible only one paper copy of any personal information will be retained and that will be held within the Corporate Office. Electronic copies of personal information will be held securely, with restricted access.

Breach of Policy and Standards

- 8 Any employee who knowingly or recklessly contravenes any instruction contained in, or following from, this policy and standards may, depending on the circumstances of the case, have disciplinary action, which could include dismissal, taken against them.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 9 The Town Clerk has overall responsibility for the policy.
- 10 The Corporate and Policy Officer is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy including ad-hoc checks to ensure compliance.
- 11 Service Managers are responsible for ensuring their records are kept and destroyed in line with this policy.
- 12 The individual departments and sections are responsible for ensuring that the guidelines set out in this policy are adhered too and to ensure that any documents

disposed of are done so in accordance with their 'sensitivity' (i.e. whether they are normal waste or 'Confidential Waste').

Confidential Waste

- 13 Fundamentally, any information that is required to be produced under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations, is available on the website or is open to public inspection should **NOT** be treated as confidential waste.
- 14 However, any information that is protected by the Data Protection Act and GDPR as Confidential under the Council's Constitution should be treated as confidential waste for disposal purposes.

Examples of what constitutes confidential waste:

- Exempt information contained within committee reports.
- Files containing the personal details of an individual and files that predominantly relate to a particular individual or their circumstances. For example, completed application forms and letters.
- Materials given to us on a 'confidential' or on a limited use basis e.g. material provided by contractors or the police.
- Any documents which may contain names, addresses, dates of birth etc.

Examples of what does not constitute confidential waste:

- Documents that are available to the public via our website or by submitting an appropriate search request to ourselves for general information.
- All reports and background papers of matters taken to Committee in public session unless specifically exempt.

Disposal of Documentation

- 15 Confidential waste which clearly shows any personal information or information which can be identified using the parameters set out in 14 will be shredded within the council buildings, unless arrangements have been made with a reputable company for bulk disposal.
- 16 All pre-school information which appertains to the children is to be shredded.
- 17 Information placed in the recycling bins, where appropriate, is shredded by the appropriate section.
- 18 All other documents requiring disposal are to be securely stored until they can be shredded.

Retention

- 19 Timeframes for retention of documents have been set using legislative requirements and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Professional Development (CIPD) guidelines.
- 20 Throughout retention the conditions regarding safe storage and controlled access will remain in place.
- 21 Any unauthorised employee accessing or attempting to access personnel records will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures.
- 22 The attached 'Appendix' shows the minimum requirements for the retention of documents as determined by those officers responsible for the management of these particular documentation types. Officers holding documents should exercise judgement as to whether they can be disposed of at the end of those periods detailed in the attached 'Appendix'.

Storage and Access

- 23 All documents that contain any personal data should be stored in lockable cabinets or in a lockable office. Electronic data should have limited access to folders or be encrypted. The use of passwords for documents should be kept to a minimum.

Handling

- 24 The Council complies with s124 of the Police Act 1997, so that Disclosure Information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. The Council maintains a risk assessment record which is held within the personnel folder of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure Information has been revealed and recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- 25 Personal information will only be available to those who are authorised officers.
- 26 Customers' details and information will be kept up to date and reviewed annually by an authorised officer.

Usage

- 27 Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's/employee's consent has been given. Disclosure Information will be shared between different areas of the Council, if necessary.
- 28 Where Disclosure information is shared with anyone other than the Town Clerk, Corporate & Policy Officer, Finance Manager and the direct Manager the employee must be given a reason why this information is being shared.

APPENDIX A**Recommended Document Retention Timescales**

The retention period should be the number of years specified **plus** the current financial period (i.e. three years plus the current period, therefore at least three years documentation will always be retained at any given point in time).

This list is not exhaustive, if you are unsure about any document contact the Town Clerk or Corporate and Policy Officer for clarification.

Document	Retention Period
Financial	
Published Final Accounts	Indefinitely
Signed Audited Accounts	Indefinitely
Final Account working papers	5 years
Records of all accounting transactions held by the Financial Management System	At least 7 years
Cash Books (records of monies paid out and received)	10 years
Purchase Orders	6 years
Cheque Payment Listings (Invoices received)	6 years
BACS listings	6 years
Goods received notes, advice notes and delivery notes	1 year
Copy receipts	6 years
Petty cash vouchers and reimbursement claims	6 years
Debtors and rechargeable works records	6 years
Expenses and travel allowance claims	6 years
Asset Register for statutory accounting purposes	10 years
Journal Sheets	5 years
Trial Balance	10 years
Published Budget Books	Indefinitely
Medium Term Financial Plan	Indefinitely
Budget Estimates – Detailed Working Papers and summaries	3 years
Bank Statement (Disk Space) and Instructions to banks	6 years
Bank Statements (Hardcopy)	6 years
Banking Records including Giro cheques, bills of exchange and other negotiable instruments	6 years
Prime evidence that money has been banked	6 years
Refer to Drawer (RD) cheques	2 years
Cancelled Expenditure cheques	2 years
Bank Reconciliation	3 years
Cheques presented / drawn on the Council bank accounts	3 years
Prime records that money has been correctly recorded in the Council's financial systems	3 years

Document	Retention Period
Leisure System Income Statements (Sports and Golf Complex)	6 years
Pre-schools Funding Claims/Records	3 years
Grant/Funding Applications and Claims	7 years
Precept Forms	Indefinitely
Internal Audit Plans / Reports	3 years
Fees and Charges Schedules	5 years
Time sheets and overtime claims	6 years
Payroll and tax information relating to employees	6 years
Payroll costing analysis	2 years
Records of payment made to employees for salaries / wages (including intermediate payslips)	6 years
Statutory end of year returns to Inland Revenue and Pensions Section	Indefinitely
Loans and Investment Records; temporary loan receipts and loan tabulations	10 years (after redemption of loan)
VAT, Income Tax and National Insurance Records	6 years
Current and expired insurance contracts and policies	indefinitely
Insurance records and claims	Indefinitely
Capital and contracts register	Indefinitely
Final accounts of contracts executed under hand	6 years from completion of contract
Final accounts of contracts executed under seal	12 years from completion of contract
All other reconciliations	3 years
PDQ Receipts	18 months following transaction date
Personnel	
Unsuccessful application forms	6 months
Unsuccessful reference requests	1 year
Successful applications forms and CVs	For duration of employment + 30 years
References received	For duration of employment + 30 years
Statutory sick records, pay, calculations, certificates etc.	For duration of employment + 6 years
Annual leave records	For duration of employment + 6 years
Unpaid leave/special leave	For duration of employment + 6 years
Annual appraisal/assessment records	Current year and previous year
Time Control Records	2 years
Disclosure and Barring Checks	Only the date of the check, the reference number and any results will be

Document	Retention Period
	maintained electronically for duration of employment + 30 years
Personnel files and training records	5 years after employment ceases
Disciplinary or grievance investigations - proven	Warnings will be removed when spent, provided a further warning has not been given in the meantime Anything involving children - permanently
Disciplinary or grievance investigations - unproven	6 years after employment ceases
Statutory Maternity/Paternity records, calculations, certificates etc	3 years after the tax year in which the maternity period ended
Wages/salary records, overtime, bonuses, expenses etc	6 years
Identity and Right to Work Checks	30 years
Safeguarding Policy including revisions	30 years
Safeguarding Policy training	30 years
Corporate	
Minutes and reports of Committee meetings	Indefinitely
Minutes and reports for Special Committee meetings	Indefinitely
Minutes and reports of sub-committees	Indefinitely
Notes and reports of working groups	Indefinitely
Policies and procedures	Until updated or reviewed
Asset Management records	Indefinitely
Asset management reports	Indefinitely
Internal audit records	3 years
Internal audit fraud investigation	7 years from date of final outcome of investigation
Risk register	Indefinitely
Risk management reports	Indefinitely
Performance reports	Indefinitely
Equalities data	Indefinitely
Questionnaire data	Indefinitely
Details regarding burials	Indefinitely
General Photographic Consents	3 months
Drivers log books and mileage	6 years
Vehicle maintenance and registration records (all necessary certificates, MOT certificates, test records and vehicle registration documents etc)	2 years after vehicle disposed of
Fuel usage records	3 years
Allotment application forms	Length of Tenancy + 2 years
Allotment agreements	Length of Tenancy + 2 years
Events health & safety statements	2 years

Document	Retention Period
Events application including caterers, displays and competition entrants	1 year
Services and equipment quotations – Events	1 year
Contacts for Events	1 year
Santa Letters received and database of replies	Delete in New Year
Senior Citizens' Excursions tenders for coach hire	1 year
Senior Citizens' Excursions Electronic communication with hotels and prices	2 years
Senior Citizens' Excursions database of applicants	1 year
Senior Citizen's Excursions Paper Application Form	Shred following event
Senior Citizen's Excursions Pre-tender qualification document Summary list of expression of interest received Company contacts A summary of any financial or technical evaluation supplied with the expressions of interest	Initial application 1 year.)) 3 years or life of contract))
Successful tender documentation	Life of contract + 6 years
Unsuccessful tender documentation	Until final payment is made
Deeds of land and property	Indefinitely
Land and property rental agreements	6 years after expiry of the agreement
Property evaluation lists	Indefinitely
Lease agreements, variation and valuation queries	6 years after the expiry of the agreement
Documentation referring to externally funded projects	6 years
Child Protection Details	Office copy retained for 6 months Individual copy valid for 3 Years
Planning application documents	Paper documents shredded immediately, electronic records kept for 1 year
Comment and complaint forms	1 year after complaint has been resolved
Exclusion Records	Same period of time again as the initial exclusion. Paper and electronic records
Grants and Donations requests to Council	12 months
Pre-Schools	
Children's records	4 years after a child has left the pre-school
Special Needs Information	
Registers	
Application Forms	
Headcount Forms	
Headcount Declarations	

Document	Retention Period
Child Information Sheets	All documents to be shredded
Waiting Lists	
Attendance Records	
Accident Forms – everyday bumps and scrapes	
Accident Forms - of a more serious nature	Until the child's 21 st birthday
Oakleaf Sports and Golf Complex	
Membership records	Current year plus 1 year
Parental Consent forms	1 year
Booking forms	18 months
Booking diaries	3 years
Electronic booking information	Is held in the system indefinitely due to the need to gather statistical information but personal information is removed
Premises License applications	Indefinitely
Gaming Permit	1 year
Performing Rights Society (PRF)	1 year
Statistical usage data	Indefinitely
Applications forms for specific courses etc	1 year
Health and Safety	
Accident books	30 years after the date of the last entry (unless an accident involving chemicals or asbestos is contained within *see below)
* Medical records containing details of employee exposed to asbestos or as specified by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999	40 years from the date of the last entry
Medical examination certificates	4 years from date of issue
Records relating to accidents person over 18 years	3 years from date of accident
Records relating to accidents person under 18 years	Until 21 st birthday
Asbestos records for premises/property including survey and removal records	40 years
Parks and play area inspection reports	21 years
All inspection certificates (CORGI, FENSA etc)	2 years
Repairs job sheets	2 years
Periodic machinery inspection tests (PAT, equipment calibration etc)	2 years
Warranties	10 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of general waste	3 years

Document	Retention Period
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of hazardous waste	10 years
Plant and equipment testing	2 years
Risk Assessment Forms	2 years
Unusual Incident Forms	3 years
Manual Handling Assessment Forms	3 years