

TINTWISTLE PARISH COUNCIL

# Records Retention Policy and Procedure

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, who 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

## Introduction

A Retention Schedule is a list of records that need to be kept by Tintwistle Parish Council for a specific length of time.

This schedule contains recommended retention periods for records created and maintained by the Parish Council and refers to all information regardless of the media in which it is stored, such as manual files, photographs, electronic files, tapes or microfiche.

The aim of the Retention Schedule is to provide a consistent approach to the way the Council handles its records and provide a clear set of guidelines.

A Retention Schedule serves the purpose of identifying records that may be worth preserving permanently as a part of a local authority archive as well as preventing the premature destruction of records that need to be retained for a specific legal, financial or statutory period.

This Retention Schedule details the function of each record, the type of records that may fall within this function and the length of time the Council should hold the record before taking disposal or archive action.

Many retention periods are determined by statute.

The Parish Council needs to keep accurate and timely records for the appropriate period of time, making sure that obsolete records are securely disposed of in an appropriate manner.

## Retention of Documents Procedure

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.

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| **Retention of Documents and Records Schedule for the audit of parish councils**

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| **Document** | **Minimum retention period** | **Reason** |
| Minutes of Council meetings | Indefinite | Archive |
| Agendas | Indefinite | Archive |
| Receipt & Payment (or Income & Expenditure) Accounts  | Indefinite | Archive |
| Receipt books  | 6 years | VAT |
| Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Bank paying-in books | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Cheque book stubs | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Quotations and tenders | 6 years | Statute of Limitations |
| VAT Invoices | 6 years | VAT |
| Paid cheques | 6 years  | Statute of limitations |
| VAT Records | 6 years  | VAT |
| Petty cash receipts | 6 Years | Audit |
| Planning Applications | See below | Management |
| Electoral Register | 1 year – once new one is issued destroy previous | Management |
| Insurance polices | While valid | Management |
| Investments | Indefinite  | Audit, Management |
| Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts | Indefinite   | Audit, Management |
| Declaration of acceptance of office | Term of office plus 1 year | Management |
| For halls, centres and Recreation grounds- Application to hire- Booking diaries- Copies of bills to hirers  | 6 years | Audit, Management |
| For allotments-Allotment applications/letters | Length of Tenancy Plus 2 years  | Management |
| Documents referring to externally funded projects | 6 years | Management |
| General Information | At end of useful life | Management |
| Routine correspondence, papers and emails | At end of useful life | Management |

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| **Planning Applications** |  |  |

Where planning permission is granted, the planning application, any plans and the decision letter should normally be retained until the development has been completed so that, if required, the Council can check that the development proceeds in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permission. Where planning permission is granted on appeal, a copy of the appeal decision should also be retained.

Where planning permission is refused, the papers should be retained until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired. If an appeal is made, and dismissed, the decision letter may be worth retaining against further applications relating to the same site.

## Information from other bodies

Such information should be retained for as long as it is useful and relevant (e.g. circulars from county associations and principal authorities etc.).

\*See Appendix A – Legitimate interest assessment.

## Disposal procedures

All documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded if confidential and disposed of.

This Policy was approved by Tintwistle Parish Council at its meeting on 24th October 2022.

**Appendix A:**

**LEGITIMATE INTEREST ASSESSMENT - WITH REFERENCE TO THE TINTWISTLE PARISH COUNCIL RECORDS RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY**

The Parish Council has applied a Legitimate Interests Assessment in relation to the following sets of data held by the Council. The three tests of purpose, necessity and balance have been applied to each data set.

1. The annual record of Allotment Tenants on the Conduit Street, Manchester Road and Arnfield allotment sites. The record includes names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of each tenant. These are held for the purpose of contacting individual tenants for the payment of fees and in the event of any issues related to that individual tenant. The annual record is revised in October of each year.
2. The quarterly published Waiting List of those who have applied for an allotment. See the application form attached for details required of each tenant.