

Records Management and Retention Policy

1. South Hinksey Parish Council recognizes 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.
2. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:
 - Scope
 - Responsibilities
 - Relationships with existing policies
 - Retention Schedule.

Scope of the policy

3. This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the carrying out of its functions.
4. 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
5. A small percentage of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Parish Council's archives and for historical research. Historically these include the Minutes of the Meetings.

Responsibilities

6. The Parish Council has 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 to the Parish Council.
7. The person responsible for records management 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
8. Persons employed (if any) by the Parish Council must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate and are

maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Relationship with existing policies

9. The policy has been drawn up within the context of:
 - Freedom of Information policy
 - Data Protection guidelines
 - Transparency code for smaller authoritiesand with other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Parish Council.

Retention Schedule

10. 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.
11. Members of staff are 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.
12. The retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored

a) Planning Papers

Permission Granted

All papers retained until the development has been completed to allow the Parish Council to check that the development proceeds in accordance with the terms of the permission

Appeal Decisions

These should be retained indefinitely as it may be required should there be longer term implications e.g. the decision creates a precedent for other developments in the locality

Permission Refused

All papers should be retained until the period in which an appeal can be made has expired. If a resulting appeal is dismissed the

documentation should be retained in case further applications relating to the same site result

Structure Plans and Local Plans

These should also be retained

b) Retention of Documents required for the audit of Parish Councils

Document	Minimum Retention Period
Minute books	Indefinite and transfer to Oxfordshire History Centre
Scale of Fees and Charges	Six years
Management Receipts and Payments Account	Indefinite
Annual Return	Indefinite
Receipt books	Six years
Bank statements	Three years
Bank paying-in books	Three years
Cheque books and stubs	Three years
Quotations and tenders	12 years
Paid invoices	Six years
Paid cheques	Six years
VAT records	Six years
Wages Books	12 years
Insurance policies	40 years
Certificates of Employers Liability	21 legal requirement

Document	Minimum Retention Period
Certificates of Public Liability	21 legal requirement
Investments	Indefinite
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite
Members' Allowances	Six years Statute of Limitations
Sound Recordings	One year
General Correspondence	Six years at Clerk's discretion
Burial Ground Records	Indefinite

13. There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence. However, an annual review of all documentation should be carried out with ephemeral items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving or offered to the Oxfordshire History Centre as appropriate.