

SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

Introduction

The Parish Council recognises that 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

Disposal of records

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council while 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 she/he 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 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. 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.

Disposal procedures:

All documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded, destroyed and disposed of and /or deleted.

Retention of Documents Schedule

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

Document	Minimum	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt & Payment Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt Books	6 years	VAT
Bank Statements, paying in books, cheque book stubs	Last completed year plus current year	Audit
Quotations & Tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid Invoices & paid cheques	6 years	VAT & Limitation Act
VAT Records	6 years	VAT
Timesheets	Last completed year plus current year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid – as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under it.	Management
Certificates of Employers Liability Insurance	Indefinitely	Employers Liability Insurance Regs 1998
Investments	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Members Allowance Register	6 years	Tax Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Planning Applications	Until considered by committee of full council	Management
Declarations of Acceptance of Office	Term of office + 1 year	Management
Members' Register of Interests	Term of office + 1 year	Management
Complaints	1 year	Management
General information not required for historical purposes	1 year	Management
Routine correspondence & emails	1 year	Management
Project/topic based information	Length of project + 1 year	Management

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at North Norfolk District 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 in the above schedule.

Date Approved May 2026

Date to be reviewed May 2029