

# **BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL**

## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS AND RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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Adopted: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019 Minute No.

Next review: June 2021

### **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS AND RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Barnstaple Town 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 Town Council. 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**

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Town Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents that facilitate the business carried out by the Town 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 Town Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Town 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 this policy is the Town Clerk.

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.

Individual staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Town Council's records management guidelines.

## Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information policy
- Data Protection policy

And with other legislation or regulations (including audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Town Council.

## Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Town Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series that 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 that should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

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.

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

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD - INDEFINITE</b>	
Investments	Audit, Management
Pension records	SLCC recommendation
Signed minutes of council meetings (Hard copy)	Archive
Title deeds, leases, agreements	Audit, Management

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 25 YEARS</b>	
Accident books	Should a claim arise
Equipment Inspection Records	Management
Management Risk Assessments	Should a claim arise
Management Equipment Inspection records	Should a claim arise
Premises Inspection records	Should a claim arise

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 21 YEARS (from commencement of insurance)</b>	
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 12 YEARS</b>	
Wages books/Payroll records	Superannuation

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 10 YEARS</b>	
Application to hire, booking forms	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). VAT inspections every 10 years
Bank statements including deposit/savings accounts	VAT inspections every 10 years
Bank paying-in books	VAT inspections every 10 years
Paid invoices	VAT inspections every 10 years
Paid cheques and cheque book stubs	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Members allowances register	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). VAT inspections every 10 years
Receipt and payment accounts (Hard copy)	VAT inspections every 10 years
Receipt books of all kinds	VAT inspections every 10 years
VAT records	VAT inspections every 10 years

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 6 YEARS</b>	
Contracts, quotations, tenders	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Personnel files (not payroll)	Should a claim arise
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 5 YEARS</b>	
Audit Budgetary control papers	SLCC recommendation
Management Finance & Payroll scale of fees & charges	SLCC recommendation

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 4 YEARS</b>	
Acceptance of office	Term of office
Register of members interests	Term of office

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 2 YEARS</b>	
Correspondence, papers on important issues	For reference purposes
Complaints	Management
Press releases	Management
Town Council Newsletter	Management
Reports, newsletters etc	Management
Timesheets	Comparison of sickness and absence

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – 1 YEAR</b>	
Allotment plot holder register, tenancy agreements	Allotment Act 1908/1950

<b>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD – less than a year</b>	
Job application forms (unsuccessful)	Should a claim arise

<b>UNTIL PROJECT OR DEVELOPMENT IS COMPLETED</b>	
Public consultation - survey and returns	Management
Planning applications where granted, plans and decision letters	Planning and enforcement
Planning Appeal decision notice	Planning and enforcement

<b>UNTIL APPEAL PERIOD HAS EXPIRED</b>	
Planning applications where refused, plans and decision letters	Planning and enforcement

<b>AS LONG AS IN FORCE</b>	
Structure plans, Local Plans and similar documents	Planning and enforcement

<b>IMMEDIATELY</b>	
Handwritten notes at meetings	Not legal record. Aide de memoire only. Subject to FOI