

Heighington Parish Council

Records Retention Policy

Document Ref: POL/REC

Status: Approved

Version: 2.0

Date of approval: 14/04/25

Minute reference: 232/M/24

Date of next review: April 2027

Version Control:

Version: 2.0

Amended by: Clerk

Date approved: 14/04/25

Amendments: Document renamed (HPC Records Retention Policy). Reviewed in line with NALC LTN (Legal Topic Note) 40 and with samples from other local councils. Co-option secret ballot voting slips added.

Minute reference: 232/M/24

Version: 1.0 (Records Retention Policy)

Document creation by: Clerk, based on LALC model template.

Date approved: 14/03/22

Minute reference: 184/M/21

Records Retention Policy

Heighington Parish Council (“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 council. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

Scope

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 may be selected for permanent preservation as part of its 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 this policy is the 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 employees and all other role holders 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.

Retention Schedule

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

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Administration		
Signed minutes of Council meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Signed minutes of committee meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Notes and draft minutes	Until final minutes have been approved and signed.	Management
Agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Management
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Management
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Management
Grouping orders, byelaws and orders	Indefinite	Audit
Title deeds	Indefinite (may be held by solicitors on behalf of authority)	Audit / Management
Lease agreements	12 years	Limitation Act 1980
Contracts	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Maps, plans and surveys of property owned by the council	Indefinite	Audit
Correspondence – postal or electronic communications including emails, text messages and telephone messages	At end of useful life	Management
Information requests	6 years and until there is no longer an administrative need	Management
Complaints	6 years and until there is no longer an administrative need	Management
Register of electors	Retained until replaced by updated register	Management
Co-option secret ballot voting slips	Retain only until co-option resolution has been made	Management
Email messages	At end of useful life	Management

Employment		
Staff employment contracts	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Staff references	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Application forms (interviewed – unsuccessful)	12 months following appointment of successful candidate	Equalities Act 2010
Application forms (interviewed – successful)	6 years after ceasing employment	Equalities Act 2010
Disciplinary files	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Staff appraisals	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Timesheets	3 years after last completed audit year	Audit (legal) Personal injury (best practice)
Finance		
Annual audited accounts and AGAR documents	6 years. (Minimum of 5 years – recommended 6 in line with other financial information).	Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
Receipt and payment accounts	6 years	VAT Act 1994
Bank statements and reconciliations	6 years	Audit / Management
Receipt books	6 years	VAT Act 1994
Cheque book stubs	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit / Management
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT Act 1994
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
VAT records and claims	6 years generally but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT Act 1994
Payroll and pension contribution records	12 years (Minimum statutory retention of 6 years' recommended retention of 12 years)	Limitation Act 1980
Petty cash accounts	6 years	Audit
Investments	Indefinite	Audit and management
Tenders and quotes documentation (successful)	12 years	Audit / Management
Tenders and quotes documentation (unsuccessful)	2 years	Audit / Management
Insurance		
Insurance policies	As long as it is possible for a claim to be made under it.	Management and legal proceedings.

Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	Indefinitely.	Management. Future claims.
Certificates for Public Liability	6 years after policy end	Management
Insurance claim records	6 years after policy end	Management
Health and Safety		
Accident books	3 years from date of last entry. If relating to a child or young adult, retain until they reach the age of 21.	Statutory - RIDDOR
Risk assessment	3 years after the date of expiry	Management
Play area inspection records	21 years	Statutory
Asset register	Indefinite	Audit / Management
Councillors		
Declarations of acceptance of office	Term of office (4 years unless office vacated sooner)	Management
Register of interests	Current register for duration of term of office. (Copies of outdated register of interest to be destroyed).	Management
Consent forms	5 years	Management
Councillor contact details	Duration of membership	Management
Councillor allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980
GDPR Security Compliance form	Duration of membership	Management
Hires		
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Application to hire, lettings diaries, copies of invoices to hirers.	6 years	VAT
Hirer Terms & Conditions	6 years	Management