

HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY

Hingham 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 council. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

Aim

To inform the public and councillors of Hingham Town Council's policy for the storage and length of storage of all documents relating to the Town Council and their availability

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the council in the course of carrying out its functions.

Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the 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.

Relevant records will be preserved as part of the council's archives for historical purposes.

Responsibilities

The town council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment to minimise potential risks. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the clerk to the council.

The clerk will promote compliance with this policy so that information may be retrieved easily, appropriately and timely, and must ensure that records for which she is responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the 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 OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR AUDIT

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees & charges	5 years	Management
Receipt & payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	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	12 years/ indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage, & telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
Time-sheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management

Title deeds, leases, agreements, contract	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998(SI2753) Management
Members allowances register	Indefinite	Audit, Management
For Burial Grounds		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of fees collected • Register of burials • Register of purchased graves • Register/plan of grave spaces • Register of memorials • Applications for internment • Applications for right to erect memorials • Disposal certificates • Copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial 	Indefinite	Archives, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 204)

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS FOR LEGAL PURPOSES

Most legal proceedings are governed by the 'limitations acts' - limiting the time in which legal claims may be commenced. The periods vary depending on the type of claim.

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence (and other 'Torts')	6 years
Defamation	1 year

Contract	6 years
Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
To recover land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

RETENTION OF OTHER DOCUMENTS

Planning Papers

- a) Where planning permission is granted, the planning application, any plans and the decision letter shall be retained until the development has been completed. Where planning permission is granted on appeal, a copy of the appeal shall also be retained until the development has been completed.
- b) Where planning permission is refused, the papers should be retained until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired.
- c) Copies of Structure Plans, Local Plans and similar documents shall be retained as long as they are in force.

Insurance Policies

Insurance policies and significant correspondence shall be kept as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under the policy. In addition the council shall keep a permanent record of insurance company names and policy numbers for all insured risks.

Correspondence

Correspondence related to audit matters shall be kept for the appropriate period specified in the above list. In planning matters, correspondence shall be retained for the same period as other planning papers. Other correspondence shall be retained for 5 years

Personnel Matters

Documentation relating to staff shall be kept securely and for as long as it would be possible for a claim to be made against the council.

Review date
May 2017