

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

Introduction

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 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 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 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, who 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 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. 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 and disposed of.

Retention of Documents Schedule

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

| Document | Minimum Retention | Reason |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Minute books | Indefinite | Archive |
| Annual accounts | Indefinite | Archive |
| Annual return | Indefinite | Archive |
| Bank statements | 7 years | Audit management |
| Cheque book stubs | Last completed | Audit management |
| Paying in books | Last completed | Audit management |
| Quotations | 7 years | Audit |
| Paid invoices | 7 years | Audit/VAT |
| VAT record | 7 years | Audit/VAT |
| Salary records | 7 years | Audit |
| Tax & NI records | 7 years | Audit |
| Insurance policies | Whilst valid | Audit |
| Cert. of Employers Liability | 40 years | Audit/legal |
| Cert. of Public Liability | 40 years | Audit/legal |
| Assets register | Indefinite | Audit |
| Deeds, leases | Indefinite | Audit |
| Declarations of acceptance | Term of office + 1 year | Management |
| Members register of interests | Term of office + 1 year | Management |
| Complaints | 1 year | Management |
| General information | 3 months | Management |
| Routine correspondence & e-mails | 6 months | Management |