

# *Huish Episcopi Parish Council*

## **DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY September 2019**

Adopted September 2019 minute ref

**1 Purpose:** Huish Episcopi Parish Council (HEPC) requires a wide variety of documents for transacting its business and is committed to retaining these documents in a format and for periods of time that:

Enables HPC to meet its statutory obligations in respect of documents subject to legislation;

- Ensures security of documents;
- Protects employees' privacy;
- Facilitates access to information;
- Optimises the use of storage space;
- Is cost effective; and
- Facilitates destruction of redundant documents.

**2 Scope:** This Policy applies to users of HEPC's information records, both paper and electronic, it includes Councillors and employees.

**3 Statutory Requirements:** Documents subject to a statutory period of retention are identified by their associated legislation in Annex A.

**4 Security of Documents:** HPC's records are held in paper and/or electronic format. To minimise the risk of accidental loss of valuable records, masters or copies (as deemed appropriate) of paper-documents will be stored off-site.

**5 Employees' Privacy:** The privacy of personnel records will be appropriately assured.

**6 Availability & Access:** All records necessary for HEPC's business will be retained for a period of time that reasonably assures the availability of records when needed.

**7 Storage Space and Cost:** Redundant records may be destroyed in order to reduce the cost of storage, indexing and handling the vast quantity of documents that would otherwise accumulate. Destruction of documents will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of this Policy to avoid any inference that a document was destroyed in anticipation of a problem.

**8 Electronic Storage:** Records maintained on electronic data processing storage media will be subject to the same rules of retention and security as paper records.

**9 Implementation of Policy:** The Clerk will be responsible for the implementation of the Policy.

**10 Monitoring & Review of Policy:** The appropriate Committee will review the Policy periodically to monitor its effectiveness, taking account of users' comments.

#### Annex A

| Document   | Minimum retention period  | Reason  |
|--|---|---|
| Signed minutes of council meetings (Hard copy)             | Indefinite  | Archive   |
| Draft/rough/notes of minutes taken at meetings             | Until minutes are approved                                      | Management  |
| Receipt and payment accounts (Hard copy)                   | Indefinite  | Archive   |
| 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                                     | 6 years   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)  |
| Paid invoices  | 6 years   | VAT   |
| Paid cheques   | 6 years   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)  |
| VAT records  | 6 years   | VAT   |
| Insurance policies   | 2 years   | Management  |
| Certificates for insurance against liability for employees | 40 years from date from when insurance commenced or was renewed | The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management |
| Investments  | Indefinite  | Audit, Management   |
| Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts                 | Indefinite  | Audit, Management   |
| Risk assessment  | 3 years from last assessment                                    | Management  |
| Register of members interests                              | 18 months after individual ceases to be a Member                | Management  |
| Complaints   | 5 yrs. after closure of case                                    | Management  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Press releases  | 6 years  | Management                                 |
| Public consultation - survey and returns                        | 5 years  | Management                                 |
| Register of Officer interests                                   | Indefinite   | Management                                 |
| Reports, newsletters etc.                                       | Retain as long as useful   | Management                                 |
| Correspondence  | 6 months   | Management                                 |
| <b>Planning</b>   |  |  |
| Planning applications where granted, plans and decision letters | Until decision published   | Available indefinitely online SSDC website |
| Appeal decision notice  | Until development completed, maybe longer as may set a precedent | Planning and enforcement                   |
| Planning applications where refused, plans and decision letters | Until period in which appeal can be made expires                 | Planning and enforcement                   |
| Structure plans, Local Plans and similar documents              | As long as in force  | Planning and enforcement                   |
| <b>Documentation for Legal purposes (unless extended)</b>       |  |  |
| Negligence  | 6 yrs.   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Defamation  | 1 yr.  | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Contract  | 6 yrs.   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Sums recoverable  | 6 yrs.   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Leases  | 12 yrs.  | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Personal injury   | 3 yrs.   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| To recover land   | 12 yrs.  | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Rent  | 6 yrs.   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |
| Breach of Trust   | None   | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)           |