

The Parish Council of Little Harrowden



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Records Retention Policy

Procedure reviewed and re-adopted at the meeting of Little Harrowden Parish Council held on: 12th July 2023

Policy updated, reviewed and adopted: 09.09.26

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier if required by changes to legislation, guidance or the Council's procedures. **Next review: September 2029**

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Little Harrowden 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.

It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Retention Schedule

Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by Little Harrowden Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by Little Harrowden 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 Little Harrowden Parish Council records may be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives or for archiving in the public interest and historical research, subject to appropriate safeguards.

Personal data will be retained only for as long as is necessary for the purpose for which it was collected, taking account of any statutory, regulatory, legal, audit or operational requirements. At the end of the applicable retention period, records will be reviewed and securely deleted or destroyed unless there is a lawful and documented reason for continued retention or they are selected for permanent archiving.

Responsibilities

Little Harrowden 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 staff and employees must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with Little Harrowden Parish Council's records management guidelines. The Clerk will periodically review records against the retention schedule and arrange for records which are no longer required to be securely deleted, destroyed or transferred for permanent archiving as appropriate.

Records must not be destroyed where they are required for ongoing or reasonably anticipated legal proceedings, complaints, investigations, audit, insurance claims, statutory requests or other regulatory purposes, even where the normal retention period has expired. They should be reviewed and disposed of when that requirement ends.

Retention Schedule

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

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minutes		
Minutes of Council meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Minutes of committee meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Employment		
Staff employment contracts	6 years after ceasing employment	Management / Limitation Act 1980

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Staff payroll information	6 years after end of relevant tax year	HMRC / National Minimum Wage
Staff references	Up to 6 years after ceasing employment, subject to review	Management / UK GDPR
Application forms (interviewed – unsuccessful)	6 months	Management
Application forms (interviewed – successful)	Up to 6 years after ceasing employment, subject to review	Management / UK GDPR
Disciplinary files	Up to 6 years after ceasing employment, subject to review	Management / UK GDPR
Staff Appraisals	Up to 6 years after ceasing employment, subject to review	Management / UK GDPR
Finance		
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment accounts	6 years	VAT
Bank statements	6 years	Audit / Finance
Cheque book stubs	6 years	Audit / Finance
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT / Finance
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 / Finance
Payroll records	6 years after end of relevant tax year	HMRC / National Minimum Wage
Petty Cash Accounts	6 years	Audit / Finance
Insurance		
Insurance policies	6 years after policy end	Management
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years after policy end	Insurance / potential long-tail 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	Statutory
Risk assessment	3 years	Management
General Management		
Councillors contact details	Duration of membership	Management
Contracts (not under seal)	6 years after contract end	Limitation Act 1980

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Routine emails and correspondence	Delete when no longer required. If part of another Council record, retain for the period applicable to that record.	Management / UK GDPR
Records of consent	For duration of processing relying on consent and thereafter only as long as reasonably required to demonstrate compliance	UK GDPR accountability
GDPR Security Compliance form	Duration of membership and thereafter in accordance with any related compliance requirement	UK GDPR accountability
Contracts under seal / deeds	12 years after contract end	Limitation Act 1980
Complaints and Data Protection		
Substantive complaints and complaint investigation records	6 years after closure, subject to review	Management / legal claims / UK GDPR
Compliments	Delete when no longer required, or anonymise if retained for reporting or service improvement	Management / UK GDPR
Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious case records	3 years after the matter or restriction ends, subject to review	Management / legal claims / UK GDPR
Personal data breach records	6 years after closure, subject to review	UK GDPR accountability
Subject Access Requests and other data protection rights requests	3 years after closure, unless required longer for an ongoing complaint, claim or investigation	UK GDPR accountability
Information Requests		
Freedom of Information Act / Environmental Information Regulations requests and responses	3 years after closure, unless the correspondence forms part of another record requiring longer retention	FOIA / EIR / Management
Other Council Records		
General resident correspondence and enquiries	Delete when resolved and no longer required. Substantive correspondence follows the retention period for the relevant subject or record.	Management / UK GDPR
Councillor declarations and administrative records	Duration of office and thereafter only as long as required by law or for Council administration	Legal / Management / UK GDPR
Planning consultation responses and related Council representations	Permanent where forming part of the Council's formal decision record; otherwise retain only as long as required	Archive / Management