DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Date Adopted:	Minute Ref:	Review Cycle:
02/10/2025	25/99	Bi-annually

Document Retention & Disposal Policy

1. Introduction
This policy sets out how the Parish Council manages the creation, retention, storage, and disposal of documents and records. It ensures compliance with:

- The Smaller Authorities' Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioners' Guide
- The Local Government Act 1972
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

2. Principles

- Records will be retained only as long as necessary for legal, financial, or operational reasons.
- Confidential disposal will be used where documents contain personal or sensitive information.
- Digital and paper records will be managed in the same way, with appropriate security.
- A retention schedule (see Section 5) sets minimum and maximum time periods.

3. Responsibilities

- The **Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)** is responsible for maintaining this policy and ensuring compliance.
- All councillors and staff must follow the policy when handling council documents.

4. Storage

- **Paper records** will be kept securely in the council office or another agreed secure location.
- **Digital records** will be stored on council-managed systems, including the official council domain email system and secure cloud storage.
- Personal devices and personal email accounts must not be used for long-term storage of council documents.

5. Disposal

- **Paper**: cross-cut shredding or approved confidential waste service.
- **Digital**: permanent deletion from storage systems, including backups where possible.
- **Archiving**: records with historical or community value (e.g. minutes, parish maps) may be deposited with the county records office.

6. Document Schedule

Document	Min. Retention Period	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Scale of Fees & Charges	5 years	Management
Receipt & Payment A/C	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt Books	6 years	VAT
Bank Statements	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Bank Paying in Books	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Cheque Book Stubs	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Quotations & Tenders	12 years/Indefinite	Statute of Limitations
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid Cheques	6 years	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance Policy	While valid	Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Members Allowances	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which the insurance commenced or was renewed	Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998
Accident book	3 years	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Act 2013
Annual accounts and asset registers	Indefinite	Archive
Pension contribution records	6 years	Pensions Act 2014
Personnel records, including SSP and maternity records	6 years	Limitations Act 1980
Asbestos and hazardous materials records	Indefinite	Asbestos Regulations

7. Review

This policy and the retention schedule will be reviewed every **two years** or sooner if legislation changes.