

Copythorne Parish Council – Document Retention Policy

1. **Purpose:** Copythorne Parish Council 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 the Parish Council to meet its statutory obligations in respect of documents subject to legislation.

The document storage arrangements should:

- Ensure security of documents
 - Protect employee's privacy
 - Facilitate access to information
 - Optimise the use of storage space
 - Be cost effective
 - Facilitate the destruction of redundant documents
2. **Scope:** This policy applies to users of Copythorne Parish Council 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:** Copythorne Parish Council 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) will be stored off site.
 5. **Employee's privacy:** The privacy of personnel records will be appropriately assured.
 6. **Availability and Access:** All records necessary to Copythorne Parish Council's business will be retained for a period of time that reasonably assures the availability of records 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 electronically will be subject to the same rules of retention and security as paper records.
 9. **Implementation of the Policy:** that Clerk will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.
 10. **Monitoring and Review:** the policy will be reviewed periodically to monitor its effectiveness.
 11. **Guidance:** In drafting this policy the Council has been guided by the information contained in the Hampshire Association of Local Council's Guidance Note on Data Retention.

Annex A

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Signed minutes of council meetings (Hard copy)	Indefinite (Copies from May 2019 held locally, older stored by Hampshire County Council).	Archive
Scale of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment accounts (Hard copy)	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	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years (held by Council bankers)	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books (where maintained)	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Wages books/Payroll records	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	6 years 40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management (No longer applies)
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases,	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Members allowances	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980
Health and Safety		
Accident books	25 years from closure	Management
Equipment Inspection Records	25 years	Management
Premises Inspection records	25 years	Management
Risk assessment	3 years from last assessment	Management
Members		
Register of members interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a Member	Management
Miscellaneous		
Complaints	5 yrs. after closure of case	Management
Press releases	1 years	Management
Public consultation - survey and returns	3 years	Management
Reports	6 years	Management
Parish Council Newsletters	6 years	Management
Correspondence (e-mail & paper)	Kept in accordance with its subject matter.	Management

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Documentation for Legal purposes (unless extended)		
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)

Adopted by Council
Review by Council due

10/02/2026
January 2028