



MALTON TOWN COUNCIL

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Document Retention Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 In the course of carrying out its various functions and activities, the Council collects information from individuals and external organisations and generates a wide range of data/information which is recorded. These records can take many different forms including:-

- Letters received from third parties
- Copy letters which have been sent out
- File attendance notes
- Invoices
- Completed application forms
- Plans/drawings
- Financial records
- Registers
- Contracts/deeds
- E-mail communications, and any attachments
- Photographs
- Tape recordings

1.2 Many of the above documents can be retained as 'hard' paper records or in electronic form.

1.3 Retention of specific documents may be necessary to:

- Fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements
- Evidence events/agreements in case of disputes
- Meet operational needs
- Ensure the preservation of documents of historic or other value

1.4 The untimely destruction of documents could cause the Council:

- Difficulty in defending litigious claims
- Operational problems
- Embarrassment
- Failure to comply with the Freedom of Information or Data Protection Acts requirements.

1.5 Conversely, the permanent retention of all documents is undesirable, and appropriate disposal is to be encouraged for the following reasons:

- There is a shortage of storage space
- Disposal of existing storage use can free up space for more productive activities
- Indefinite retention of personal data may be unlawful
- Reduction of fire risk
- Decluttering can be psychologically beneficial

1.6 Modern day records management philosophy emphasises the importance of organisations having in place systems for the timely and secure disposal of documents / records that are no longer required for business purposes. Additionally the freedom of information act will make it important that the Council has clearly defined policies and procedures in place for disposing of records, and that these are well documented

2. Scope and Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a corporate policy framework to govern decisions on whether a particular document (or set of documents) should either be:

- Retained – in what format and for what period, or
- Disposed of – if so when and by what method

3. Retention Period & Reasons

3.1 The retention periods for the different types of documentation and information held is set out in the table below, also the reason for retention given therein

3.2 In the event a decision is taken to dispose of a particular document or set of documents in accordance with the table below, consideration should be given to the method of disposal as set out below:

4. Method of Disposal

4.1 Disposal can be achieved by a range of processes:

- Confidential waste – i.e. making available for collection by a designated refuse collection service.
- Physical destruction on site – i.e. shredding paper records
- Deletion – where computer files are concerned
- Migration of document to external body

Retention of documents table for Malton Town Council

| Document | Minimum Retention Period | Reason |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Minute books | Indefinite | Archive |
| Scale of fees and charges | 6 years | Management |
| Project/Event Files | 1 year | For as long as is useful and relevant |
| Accounting Records | Indefinite | Archive |
| Receipt books of all kinds | 6 years | HMRC Inspections |
| Bank statements, including deposit and savings accounts | 6 years | Statutory Regulations |
| Bank paying in books | 6 years | Statutory Regulations |
| Cheque book stubs | 6 years | Statutory Regulations |
| Quotations and Tenders | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) |

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| Paid invoices | 6 years | HMRC Inspections |
| Paid cheques | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) |
| VAT records | 6 years | HMRC Inspections |
| Petty cash | 6 years | HMRC Inspections |
| Insurance policies | While valid | Management |
| Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees | 40 years from the date on which insurance commenced or was renewed | The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management |
| Investments | Indefinite | Management |
| Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts | Indefinite | Management |
| Members allowances register | 6 years | HMRC Inspections |
| For Play Areas | | |
| Weekly/Annual Inspection Registers | 17 years | Management |
| For Burial Grounds | | |
| Register of fees collected | Indefinite | Archives, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI. 204) |
| Register of burials | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Register of purchased graves | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Register / plan of grave spaces | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Register of memorials | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Applications for interment | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Applications for right to erect memorials | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Disposal certificates | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| Copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial | Indefinite | Archives, LACO 1977 as above |
| For Planning Documentation | | |
| Planning reference from planning papers | Indefinite | To create permanent record |
| Information from other bodies | | |
| County Associations, NALC, SLCC, principal bodies | Undefined | For as long as is useful and relevant |
| Magazines and Journals | Undefined | For as long as is useful and relevant |
| Staffing | | |
| Documentation relating to staff | Not longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held – 6 months if a claim / proceedings etc | To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 |
| Timesheets | Last completed audit year | Audit |
| Wages and PAYE records | 12 years | Superannuation/HMRC Inspection |
| Personnel Files | 3 years after employment terminated | Management |
| Interview Records | 6 months | For as long as is useful and relevant |

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