

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: WRITTEN RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL

PURPOSE: The Council recognises that its records are an important public asset, and are a key resource to effective operation, policy-making and accountability. Like any asset, records require careful management and this policy sets out the Council's responsibilities and activities in respect to this.

SCOPE: All employees of Sawston Parish Council have a responsibility to manage effectively Council records in accordance with specified legislation and guidelines¹. A record is defined as any information held by the Council regardless of medium (including paper, microfilm, electronic, audio-visual and record copies of publications), which is created, collected, processed, used, stored and/or disposed of by Sawston Parish Council organisations, employees, as well as those acting as its agents.

POLICY: The aim of this policy is to define a framework for managing the Parish Council's records to ensure that the Council:

- Creates and captures accurate, authentic and reliable records
- Maintains records to meet the authority's business needs
- Disposes of records that are no longer required in an appropriate manner
- Protects vital records
- Conforms to any legal and statutory requirements relating to record-keeping
- Complies with government directives.

PROCEDURE:

1. Identification of roles and responsibilities

- 1.1 The Clerk will be responsible for compliance with Freedom of Information legislation and will be responsible for Data Protection, the publication scheme and legal advice relating to any of the above. The Clerk will ensure that all employees are aware of record keeping issues.
- 1.2 All Council employees will be responsible for creating and maintaining records in relation to their work that are authentic and reliable. The Clerk has specific

¹ Public Records Act 1958 and 1967; • Local Government (Records) Act 1962; • Local Government Act 1972; • Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985; • Data Protection Act 1998; • Freedom of Information Act 2000 • Records Management Society of Great Britain - Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities 2003:1

responsibilities for records management and this responsibility should be clearly defined in their job description.

2. Training and Awareness

2.1 It is vital that all Council employees involved in creating, maintaining and using records, understand their record management responsibilities as set out in this policy. The Clerk will ensure that staff responsible for managing records are appropriately trained or experienced and that all staff understand the need for records management.

3. Records Creation and Record Keeping

3.1 The Parish Council should have in place a record keeping system (paper or electronic) that documents its activities and provides for quick and easy retrieval of information. It must also take into account the legal and regulatory environment specific to the area of work. This system will include:

- Records arranged and indexed in such a way that they can be retrieved quickly and efficiently.
- Records are linked with the Parish Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

4. Record Maintenance

4.1 The record keeping system must be maintained so that the records are properly stored and protected, and can easily be located and retrieved. This will include:

- Ensuring that adequate storage accommodation is provided for the records.
- Tracking and monitoring the movement and location of records so that they can be easily retrieved (This provides an audit trail).
- Controlling access to the information.
- Identifying vital records and applying the appropriate protection, including a business recovery plan.
- Ensuring non-current records are transferred in a controlled manner to a designated records centre rather than stored in offices.

5. Record Retention and Disposal

5.1 With increasing public access to our records, it is important that disposal of records happens as part of a managed process and is adequately documented. Therefore, the Parish Council must have in place clearly defined arrangements for the assessment and selection of records for disposal, and for documenting this work.

5.2 The system should ensure that:

- The appropriate records are reviewed and disposed of /transferred to storage as set out in Appendix 1.

SAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Review Date: April 2025

- Documentation of the disposal/transfer of records is completed and retained.
- Records selected for permanent preservation are transferred to Cambridgeshire Archives.
- An intended disposal/review date must be captured when creating electronic records.
- Records subject to a Freedom of Information request are not destroyed

Date of Parish Council meeting:

APPENDIX 1

Retention Guidelines for Written Parish Council Records

Document	Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained
Administrative			
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Storage or County
Agendas	5 years	Management	Office, storage then shred
Committee Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Storage or County
Accident Reports	20 years	Potential Claims	Office
Councillors' acceptance of office	1 year	Management	Office
Councillors' declarations of office	4 years or until left office	Management	Office
Policy documents	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Management	Office
Title Deeds	Indefinite	Archive	Storage or County
Complaints	6 Years after resolution of complaint	Management	Office
Information Requests	6 Years after resolution of complaint	Management	Office
Planning applications	1 Year	Management	Shred
Financial			
Receipt and Payment Accounts	Indefinite	Archive	Office, storage or county
Bank Statement including deposit/savings documents	Last completed Audit Year	Audit	Office then shred/confidential waste
Bank paying in books	Last completed Audit Year	Audit	Office then shred/confidential waste
Cheque book stubs	Last completed Audit Year	Audit	Office then shred/confidential waste
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Office then shred/confidential waste

SAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Review Date: April 2025

Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	Office then shred/confidential waste
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Office then shred/confidential waste
VAT records	6yrs generally but 20 yrs for VAT on rents	VAT	Office then shred/confidential waste
Timesheets	Last 3 completed Audit years	Audit Personal Injury	Office then shred/confidential waste
Wages/payroll	12 years	Superannuation	Office then shred/confidential waste
Register of Electors	Updated yearly	Management	Electronic pass word protected copy only
Play equipment Inspection reports	21 yrs	Potential Claims	Office, storage
Insurance policies	While valid	Management	Office then shred/confidential waste
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 yrs form date on which insurance commenced or renewed	The Employers' Liability (compulsory Insurance regulations 1998) Management	Office then shred/confidential waste