

# Briefing Note

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## Retention and Disposal Policy

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council accumulates a vast amount of information and data during the course of its everyday activities. This includes data generated internally in addition to information obtained from individuals and external organisations. This information is recorded in various different types of document.

1.2 Records created and maintained by the Council are an important asset and as such measures need to be undertaken to safeguard this information. Properly managed records provide authentic and reliable evidence of the Council's transactions and are necessary to ensure it can demonstrate accountability.

1.3 Documents may be retained in either 'hard' paper form or in electronic forms. For the purpose of this policy, 'document' and 'record' refers to both hard copy and electronic records.

1.4 It is imperative that documents are retained for an adequate period of time. If documents are destroyed prematurely the Council and individual officers concerned could face prosecution for not complying with legislation and it could cause operational difficulties, reputational damage and difficulty in defending any claim brought against the Council.

1.5 In contrast to the above the Council should not retain documents longer than is necessary. Timely disposal should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations so that personal information is not retained longer than necessary. This will also ensure the most efficient use of limited storage space.

2.0 The Draft Policy includes a table of advisory disposal times, together with the most appropriate method of disposal. The parish council has previously held most of its documents in paper form: it is recommended by SLCC that a systematic clear-out of unwanted paper documents be carried out, and that the default position for the council in the future is to hold any other documents in electronic form.

Author: John Hesketh Parish Clerk & RFO  
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