

BIRSTWITH PARISH COUNCIL

Records Management Policy

Adopted Date:July 2018.....

Review Date:January 2026.....

1 Introduction

1.1. The guidelines set out in this document supports Birstwith Parish Council Data Protection Policy and assists us in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) and other associated legislation.

1.2. It is important that Birstwith Parish Council has in place arrangements for the retention and disposal of documents necessary for the adequate management of services in undertaking its responsibilities. This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the retention of documents and sets out the requirements for the disposal of documents. However, it is important to note that this is a live document and will be updated on a regular basis.

1.3. Birstwith Parish Council will ensure that information is not kept for longer than is necessary and will retain the minimum amount of information that it requires to carry out its functions and the provision of services, whilst adhering to any legal or statutory requirements.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1. It is recognised that up to date, reliable and accurate information is a vital to support the work that Birstwith Parish Council does and the services that we provide to our residents. This document will help us to:

- Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the Council to operate and provide services to the public.
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the GDPR.
- Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily.
- Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations.

3. Scope

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'documents' includes electronic, microfilm, microfiche and paper records.

3.2. Where storage is by means of paper records, originals rather than photocopies should be retained where possible.

4. Standards of good practice

4.1. Birstwith Parish Council will make every effort to ensure that it meets the following standards of good practice:

- Adhere to legal requirements for the retention of information as specified in the Retention Schedule at Annex A.
- Personal information will be retained in locked filing cabinets within the Clerk's home, access to these documents will only be by authorised personnel.
- Disclosure information will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Clerk's home
- Appropriately dispose of information that is no longer required.
- Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that confidential and sensitive information is securely destroyed.
- Information about unidentifiable individuals is permitted to be held indefinitely for historical, statistical or research purposes eg. Equalities data.

- Wherever possible only one copy of any personal information will be retained and that will be held within the Clerk's home [*eg locked filing cabinet or other secure storage facility*].

5. Breach of Policy and Standards

5.1. Any employee who knowingly or recklessly contravenes any instruction contained in, or following from, this Policy may, depending on the circumstances of the case, have disciplinary action, which could include dismissal, taken against them.

5.2. Where there is a breach of the policy, the Council may need to consider whether there is also a breach of the GDPR.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. The *Birstwith Parish Council* Clerk has responsibility for implementation of the policy under delegation of the *Birstwith Parish Council*

6.2. The *Birstwith Parish Council* Clerk is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy including ad-hoc checks to ensure compliance.

7. Retention

7.1. Time frames for retention of documents have been set using legislative requirements, guidance from the National Association of Local Councils and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Professional Development (CIPD).

7.2. Throughout retention the conditions regarding safe storage and controlled access will remain in place.

7.3. The attached 'Appendix' shows the minimum requirements for the retention of documents as determined by *Birstwith Parish Council* for the management of specific documentation types. Officers holding documents should exercise judgement as to whether they can be disposed of at the end of those periods detailed in the attached 'Appendix'

8. Disposal

8.1. Documents/data no longer required by *Birstwith Parish Council* for administrative purposes must be finely shredded and deleted entirely and securely from *Birstwith Parish Council* computer system(s).

APPENDIX A

Document Retention Timescales

Document	Retention Period
Finance	
Financial Published Final Accounts	Indefinitely
Annual Governance and Accountability Return	Indefinitely
Final Account working papers	6 years
Records of all accounting transactions held in the financial management system	At least 6 years
Cheque Payment Listings (Invoices received)	6 years
Payment Vouchers Capital and Revenue (copy invoices)	12 years
Expenses and travel allowance claims	6 years
Asset Register for statutory accounting purposes	10 years
Adopted annual budget	6 years
Budget Estimates – Detailed Working Papers and summaries	3 years
Bank Statements (electronic) and Instructions to banks	6 years
Bank Statements (Hardcopy)	6 years
Prime evidence that money has been banked	6 years
Cancelled Expenditure cheques	3 years
Bank Reconciliation	3 years
Grant/Funding Applications & Claims	3 years
Precept Forms	Indefinitely
Internal Audit Plans/Reports	3 years
Fees and Charges Schedules	6 years
Current and expired insurance contracts and policies indefinitely Insurance records and claims	10 years (or as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under then)
VAT records, input and output	10 years

Redundancy records	6 years from the date of redundancy
Personnel/employment	
Statutory end of year returns to Inland Revenue and Pensions records	Indefinitely
Income Tax and National Insurance Records	Not less than 3 years after the end of the financial year to which they relate
Wages/salary records, overtime, bonuses, expenses etc	6 years
Accident books, records and reports	3 years from date of last entry (If a child or young adult is involved, then until the person reaches the age of 21)
Redundancy records	6 years from the date of redundancy

Corporate	
All <i>Birstwith Parish Council</i> minutes including minutes of committees, sub-committee meetings and any working group minutes	Indefinitely and archived after two years
Policies and procedures	Until updated or reviewed
Asset management records	Indefinitely
Internal audit records	6 years
Internal audit fraud investigation	7 years from date of final outcome of investigation
Risk register	Indefinitely
Risk assessments (any)	6 years

Health & Safety	
Health and Safety Accident books and records	3 years after the date of the last entry (unless an accident involving chemicals or asbestos is contained within then 40 years). If the accident concerns a child or young adult retain until the person reaches the age of 21.

Other	
Hard copy routine correspondence	File management – retain until matter dealt with; maximum period 6 months. Where the <i>Birstwith Parish Council</i> believes that it is necessary to keep correspondence for an increased length of time, it will redact personal data from the correspondence.
Electronic routine correspondence	File management – retain until matter dealt with; maximum period 6 months. Where <i>Birstwith Parish Council</i> believes

	that it is necessary to keep correspondence for an increased length of time, it will redact personal data from the correspondence.
Requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000	File management – retain until matter dealt with plus 6 months. Where Birstwith Parish Council believes that it is necessary to keep correspondence for an increased length of time, it will redact personal data from the correspondence.
Planning Applications	<p>Recommendations in connection with relevant planning applications are recorded in the minutes which are retained indefinitely. Correspondence (both hard copy and electronic) received in connection with planning applications will be retained in accordance with the routine documents/correspondence policy noted above.</p> <p>Where an application is refused by the local planning authority, the application will be retained until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired.</p>