FLAX BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Flax Bourton Parish Council recognises that the efficient and effective management of its records is essential to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations (General Data Protection Regulations 2018, Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 & Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and their subsequent amendments) and to assist in the satisfactory management of public business by the Parish Council.

This policy provides a framework through which this effective management and retention of public records can be achieved and properly audited.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received, or maintained by the Parish Council. Records are defined as all those documents which relate to the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its communications, transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. Some of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

2. Responsibilities

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for maintaining this policy is the Clerk and Proper Officer to the Parish Council.

The person responsible for records management will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy so that information will be stored and retrieved easily, appropriately and timely.

The Clerk and Proper Officer must ensure that the records for which he/she is responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If the Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the parish records, they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual councillors are strongly advised to undertaking "weeding" and "housekeeping" on a regular basis. On resigning from the council councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information regulations 2004, Localism Act 2011 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

3. Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been drawn up within the context of other Parish Council policies including the Flax Bourton's Publication Scheme

Records shall be managed in accordance with the Limitation Act 1980, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Localism Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations 2018, and the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the management of records and their subsequent amendments.

4. Retention Schedule

The Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing types of records which it creates or holds in the course of its business. The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

The Clerk will be expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when he/she is creating new record keeping systems.

The retention schedule refers to all Parish Council records irrespective of the media in which they are stored.

5. Minimum Retention Periods

Document or Record	Min Retention Period	Reason
Minutes & Correspondence		
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	Indefinite	Statutory requirement
Correspondence / emails & papers on important local issues & activities	Indefinite	Statutory requirement
Routine correspondence, papers & emails	1 year	Management
Finance & Payroll		
Receipt and Payment accounts	Indefinite	Statutory requirement
Annual Return & Audited accounts	Indefinite	Statutory requirement
All Bank Statements	6 years	Audit
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Cheque Books Stubs	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Correspondence relating to audit matters	6 years	Audit
Budgetary Control Papers	2 years + current year	Audit
Quotations and Tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Payroll records	12 Years	Superannuation
Timesheets	Last completed Audit year	Audit
Insurance Policies		
Cert of Employers Liability	40 years	Legal requirement
Cert of Public Liability	21 years	Legal requirement
Other insurance policies	while valid / claim can be made	Management
Insurance Claim Records	7 Years after all obligations are concluded	Legal requirement
Policy renewal records & correspondence	While valid	Management
General Management		
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit/ Management
Members allowances	6 years	Tax
Health & Safety		
Accident Books (injuries to Adults)	25 Years from closure	Management
Accident Books (injuries to Children)	25 Years from closure	Management
Equipment Inspection Records	25 Years	Management
Premises Inspection Records	25 Years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 Years from last assessment	Management

Members		
Register of Members Interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a member	Management
Miscellaneous		
Complaints	1 Year after closure of case	Management
Information requests	2 Years after closure of case	Management
Press Releases	5 Years	Management
Public consultation: surveys & returns	5 Years	Management
Register of Officers Interests	Indefinite	Management
Reports, newsletters etc from other bodies	Retain as long as useful	Management
Personnel/Human Resources		
Application forms (interviewed - unsuccessful)	6 Months	Management
Disciplinary records	Retain for employment	Management
Personal files (not payroll information)	6 years after ceasing	Management

General correspondence will be retained if relevant, the minimum period is 1 year. An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and items that have reached their deletion or destruction date being deleted/destroyed and the remainder being considered for archiving.