

<u>POLICY AND PROCEDURE:</u> 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 Melbourn 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 Melbourn 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.

2.2 A training programme will be established to ensure that all staff are aware of their obligations regarding Data Protection, Freedom of Information and 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.
- 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

Document Approval:



(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: 28 June 2021

Review Policy: Every 2 years

APPENDIX 1

Retention Guidelines for Written Parish Council Records

Records	Retention period	Action	Reason
Administrative			
Signed council and committee minutes	In perpetuity	Bind and archive	Requirement
Draft minutes	Until the date of confirmation of the minutes	Destroy	Operational
Clerks' notes of meetings	3 months after agreement of minutes by Council or Committee	Destroy	Operational
Agendas	In perpetuity	Bind and archive	Recommendation by Internal Auditor
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement. Destroy these reports if copies are already included with signed minutes	Review	Common practice
Councillors' declarations of office	4 years or until they vacate office	Destroy	Operational
Register of electors	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Copies already in existence
Grouping orders	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Byelaws and orders	Preserve one of each copy and transfer to storage once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Policy documents	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Title deeds more than 100 years old	Transfer to archive once they become inactive but not deeds still needed to prove title	Preserve	Common practice
Title deeds less than 100 years old	Transfer to archive for review once they become inactive. Archives will not	Review	Common practice

	accept deeds still needed to prove title		
Property registers and terriers	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Maps, plans, and surveys of property owned by the council or meeting	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Village/parish appraisals, plans, millennium projects and supporting papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Planning applications for minor works where permission is refused	6 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Leases, agreements, contracts and wayleaves	12 years or until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Quotations and tenders (successful)	12 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Quotations and tenders (unsuccessful)	2 years	Destroy	Operational
Routine correspondence and papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Scale of fees and charges	Until superseded by new charges	Destroy	Operational
Employers' liability insurance policies	40 years after expiry date	Destroy	Employers' Liability Act 1969 Employers' Liability Regulations 1998
Risk assessments (to include completed	21 years	Archive in PC premises	Insurance claims against the Council

inspection sheets and record of actions taken)			can be made for up to 21 years.
Personnel files	See separate policy	Destroy	Risk of investigation regarding any future litigation

Financial			
Receipt and payment books	Transfer to storage once they become inactive	Preserve	
Rate books	Transfer to storage	Preserve	
Annual audited accounts	7 years.	Destroy, but preserve if the receipt and payment books have not survived.	
Accounts and statements	7 years	Destroy	
Vouchers before 1950	7 years	Destroy	
Cash and petty cash books and rent books	7 years	Destroy	
Receipt books of all kinds	7 years	Destroy	
Postage and telephone books	7 years	Destroy	
Bank statements including deposit/saving accounts	7 years	Destroy	
Paid invoices	7 years	Destroy	
Paid cheques	7 years	Destroy	
VAT records	7 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994
VAT claims	7 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994
Time sheets	Last completed Audit year	Destroy	
Wage books	12 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation
Members' allowances register	6 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation

Records relating to parish halls, centres and recreation grounds, applications to hire, letting diaries, copies of bills to hirers and records of tickets issued	7 years	Review with the view to destroy	
Miscellaneous			
Maps created under the provision of the Rights of Way Act 1932	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Papers concerning Rights of Way	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Community magazines or newsletters	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Charity papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Press cuttings	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Photographs	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Any records predating the establishment of Parish Councils (1894), e.g. poor law, surveyors of the highway, tithe maps and apportionments, enclosure awards etc.	Transfer to archive immediately	Preserve	Common practice
Records of other bodies such as burial boards, charities, fire brigades, Home Guard unit, local society or ad hoc committee	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice

Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other organisations	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
--	--	--------	-------------