

STRATEGY / POLICY FRONT COVER



Name of Strategy / Policy: Document Retention Policy 2023

Date last updated: May 2021

Links to Council Priorities:

Priority	Linked Yes / No?
Environment	No
Housing & Regeneration	No
Health & Community Safety	Yes
A Commercial & Democratically Accountable Council	Yes

Links to Other Strategies and Policies

FOI Strategy

Publication Scheme

Data Protection Act Policy

Action Plan in this document?

No

Is progress on the action plan regularly updated?

N/A

Officer Monitoring

Name of officer responsible for coordinating and progressing the action plan: Jason Bishop

Member Monitoring

Name of cabinet member responsible for over viewing progress of the Strategy / Policy (if applicable): N/A

Member forum for agreeing the policy / strategy (if applicable): Cabinet (Strategy is largely the same with only minor amendments)

Has it been subject to a Diversity Impact Assessment? Yes

Has it been subject to an Environmental Sustainability Impact Appraisal? Yes

Has it been subject to a Privacy Impact Assessment? Yes



CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

Document Retention Policy

Version V 2023
September 2023

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INTRODUCTION

In the course of carrying out its various functions and activities the Council receives and generates a wide range of data/information which is recorded in documents. These documents can take many different forms e.g.

- letters received from third parties
- copies of letters which have been sent out
- file attendance notes
- invoices
- completed application forms
- plans/drawings
- financial records
- registers
- contracts/deeds
- e-mail communications (and any attachments)

Many of these documents are subsequently retained in one form or another e.g. as 'hard' paper records or on computer in digital form. For the avoidance of any doubt the terms 'document' and 'records' should be taken to include documents/records which are in digital format e.g. on computer as a 'Word' or 'Excel' file.

Retention of specific documents may be necessary for one or more of the following reasons:

- to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements
- to evidence events/agreements in the case of dispute
- to meet operational needs

- to ensure the preservation of documents of historic or other value

The untimely destruction of documents to which one or more of the above criteria is applicable could cause the Council:

- (i) difficulty in defending an unmeritorious claim brought against it;
- (ii) operational problems; or
- (iii) embarrassment

Conversely, the permanent retention of *all* documents is undesirable and to be discouraged. Disposal, where appropriate, is to be encouraged for the following reasons:

- There is a shortage of new storage space
- Disposal of existing documents can free up space for more productive activities
- Indefinite retention of personal data may be unlawful (see below)
- Reduction of fire risk (in the case of paper records)
- Expense

The introduction of the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”) set out legislation for the retaining of documentation and making council documentation freely available. In order to meet the 20-day deadline to provide information under the FOIA it will be essential to ensure that records are up to date and easily accessible and identifiable to ensure this deadline is met.

SCOPE & PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a corporate policy framework to govern management decisions on whether, a document (or set of documents) should either:

- (i) be retained – and if so in what format, and for what period; or
- (ii) disposed of

Additionally, this Policy seeks to delineate and clarify the roles and responsibilities of Head of Services in the decision-making process.

Matters which fall outside the scope of this Policy

This Policy is **not** concerned with the following:

- Disposal/retention of unused materials (e.g. stocks of paper, unused forms)
- Materials that do not comprise, or form part of, a record of a Council business activity/transaction.

Freedom of Information, Data Protection and General Data Protection Regulations

It is illegal to destroy information which is due for destruction but has been requested under the Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations or Data Protection Act. Such information should be kept until all deadlines for appeal procedures have been met.

The Data Protection Act also specifies that information should only be kept for as long as it is necessary. There is no specific guidance on the meaning of “necessary”, but it should be seen as a timescale that is reasonable to ensure the purpose for which the information is used for is met and any legal obligations on retention are accommodated. Any decision should be evidenced and have a rational and reasonable backing. “Just in case” is not usually a reasonable excuse for keeping personal information which should be deleted.

The Act also demands that information is accurate, and the longer information is kept and not updated, then the greater the chance that we have inaccurate data.

The General Data Protection Regulations require us to have and show we follow procedures which include document retention.

Standard Operating Procedure

Some records do not need to be kept at all. This section defines types of records that may be routinely destroyed in the normal course of business.

This applies to information that is duplicated, unimportant or of short-term facilitative value. Unimportant records or information include:

- ‘With Compliments’ slips
- Catalogue and trade journals
- Telephone message slips
- Non-acceptance of invitations
- Trivial emails, or notes not related to Castle Point Borough Council business
- Requests for stock information such as plans, advertising materials or application forms.
- Out-of-date distribution lists
- Some working papers that lead to a final report

Where the above contains personal information about an identifiable individual, this should still be shredded to avoid it falling into the wrong hands. Such items should not be thrown in the bin.

Duplicated and superseded information such as stationery, manuals, drafts, forms, and reference copies of annual reports should also be destroyed. Electronic copies of documents or faxes where a hard copy has been printed and filed are also covered.

Retention/ Disposal Protocol

Any decision whether to retain or destroy a document should be taken in accordance with the protocol below. The steps 1-5 below set out the procedure for assessing whether a document should be destroyed or retained. This process should be repeated once any minimum period of retention has expired (see section 2). This procedure is summarised in the flow chart in appendix 2

1. Assess Document

Although this may seem obvious the first step is to assess the contents of any document to ascertain what information is held. This may only take a few seconds, but it is important to ascertain what information is held to ensure that documentation is not destroyed incorrectly.

2. Is there a statutory/regulatory requirement to retain the documents?

In some cases, there is a legal requirement for documents to be kept for a minimum time period. The tables in appendix 1 provide guidance for specific documents.

There is a 'General' table to cover documents not specifically covered in the document.

3. Is information required as evidence in case of dispute/likely dispute?

Where action is taken by the council or against the council legislation provides guidance for time scales within which action must begin.

The Limitations Act 1980 specifies time limits for commencing litigation. The main time limits that are directly relevant to local government are summarised in the table overleaf.

TYPE OF CLAIM	TIME LIMIT FOR LEGAL ACTION TO HAVE BEEN BOUGHT
Simple Contract/Tort (not personal Injury) E.g. debt recovery, damage to property, compensation claims	6 years from date incident occurred
Personal Injury	3 years from date of incident OR 3 years from date injured person first had knowledge of the injury, its cause and person responsible.
Claims regarding Sealed Documents E.g. deeds of conveyance, long leases	12 years from date of cause of action
Latent Damage Claims (not personal Injury) where facts relevant to the cause of action were not known to the claimant at date of negligence.	15 years from date of negligence

4. Is information required to meet the operational needs of the service?

In some cases, retention may be desirable (whether permanent or otherwise) even though no minimum retention period applies, or has expired. Heads of Services should be open to the danger of discarding documents or records that might be useful for future reference purposes (e.g. training), as precedents, or for performance management (performance indicators, benchmarking and comparison exercises). A professional judgement needs to be made as to the usefulness of a particular document.

5. Does the document have historic interest?

Some documents currently in Council storage may be of historic interest and/or even have some monetary value. This applies to both paper and electronic records.

Where it is suspected that the document falls within this description appropriate enquiries should always be made before taking any further action. If the document is of historical or monetary value it may not be appropriate for the council to retain the document but to transfer the document to an appropriate organisation e. g. the County Records office; or even sale to an external body.

Decision to retain or destroy document

If the minimum retention period has expired and the answer to questions 3-5 is NO the document should be destroyed and a record made of the destruction see section 5 below.

If a document is to be retained where possible the file should be marked to illustrate the date when it should be reviewed or that it needs to be retained permanently.

If a paper file is to be retained for a minimum period the files should be clearly marked, where possible with that date after which retention of that document should be reviewed.

A file/spreadsheet should be kept in each department listing review dates for records to aid future audits. This will be essential where documents are only held in electronic format. This will prevent staff repeating the retention process in the future on documents that need to be kept permanently. It should also aid staff in future audits of records to pinpoint records which need to be considered for destruction.

Review on expiry of retention period.

Where a retention period has expired in relation to a particular document a review should always be carried out before a final decision is made to dispose of that document. Steps 1-5 of the protocol should be repeated and a decision made. Such review need not necessarily be detailed or time consuming. Where the Head of Service (or designated officer) is familiar with the contents of the document(s) - or where the contents are straightforward and easily apparent – such exercise may only take a few minutes.

In the event that a decision is taken to dispose of a particular document this should be completed in line with section 5 below.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for determining whether to retain or dispose of documents rests with the relevant Head of the Service.

This responsibility can be delegated to other officers.

Heads of Service will be expected to be proactive in carrying out or instigating audits of existing documentation that may be suitable for disposal. Records not marked for permanent retention should subsequently be checked on a regular basis and destroyed as appropriate, at least annually.

Legal Services can advise on whether minimum retention periods are prescribed by law and whether retention is necessary to protect the council's position where the likelihood of a claim has been identified. In other cases, the Heads of Service will have better working knowledge and will be expected to make the decision on record retention.

Disposal

Documents should be disposed of by

- throwing away
- shredding
- deleting from computer systems
- migration of document to an external body

Where information is of a personal or confidential nature it **MUST** be shredded. If there is doubt or uncertainty as to the nature of the document it should be shredded.

Migration of documents to a third party is unlikely to be an option in most cases. However, this method of disposal will be relevant where documents or records are of historic interest and/or have intrinsic value. The third party here could well be the Public Record Office ("PRO"). "Migration" includes the sale of documents to a third party.

Documentation of Disposal

Once a document has been assessed as needing to be disposed of a record should be kept in each department of:

- Any reference Number
- Date created
- Date work completed/last used
- Date destroyed
- Method of destruction
- Authorisation for destruction

These records should be kept in spreadsheet format to reduce storage of paper and to make searching for confirmation of destruction easily accessible to aid future information requests.

A standard form for recording this information is provided in Appendix 3. These records should be stored centrally in each department to enable staff dealing with requests for information to be able to easily access the information. Each department should consider recording this information electronically in order to make it easily accessible and to reduce retention of paper documents.

Appendix 1 Minimum Retention Period Guidelines

Department Specific Documents

- Committee and Electoral Registration
- Corporate Documents
- Housing and Housing / Council Tax Finance Personnel
- Human Resources
- Planning Building Control and Land Charges
- Financial Services and Audit
- Environmental Health including Health and Safety
- Leisure
- Licensing
- Legal
- Revenues and Benefits
- Open Spaces and Street Scene

Documents held across all Departments

- Contracts and Tenders
- Complaints
- Staff Records
- Electronic Records
- General

All Guidelines are obtained from Statute, General Practice or Guidance from the British Records Management Society

Committee and Electoral Registration

Documentation	Minimum Retention Period
Electoral register	Permanent
Local Election Only	1 year from date of election
Ballot Papers, Consolidated returns, <i>Council and Committee meetings</i>	6 years Agenda and Reports
Agendas, reports, minutes	Permanent Minutes
Minute taking draft notes/audio tapes	Destroy after date of confirmation of minutes
Records of disclosure by members, under old system and to monitoring officer	Permanent
<i>Partnership Agency and External meetings where CL owns record:</i> Documents establishing the committee, agendas, minutes, council reports, recommendations, supporting documents e.g. briefing and discussion papers.	Permanent
<i>Partnership Agency and External meetings where CL does not own record:</i> Documents establishing the committee, reports, recommendations, supporting documents e.g. briefing and discussion papers.	Permanent
Honors Submission Nomination form, covering documentation, letters of support	1 year after last action
Leader of Opposition and Leader of Council papers	3 years after last action

Corporate Documents

Documentation	Retention Period
Corporate Plans Strategy Plans Business Plans Annual Reports	Permanent
Strategic management team minutes	Permanent
Documents used in process of preparing business for cross departmental consideration, records of discussion debate and resolutions	3 years from closure
Documents used in process of preparing business for unit/team consideration, records of discussion debate and resolutions	3 years from closure
Statutory Returns Preparing information to be passed on to central government	7 years from closure
Policy, procedure precedent, instructions Organisation Charts, Records relating to policy implementation and development Asset management plan Community strategy, plan and safety plan	Permanent
Monitoring and reviewing strategic plans, policies and assessing compliance with guidelines	5 years from closure
<i>Public Consultation</i> Staff and public consultation of significant policies of the council	5 years from closure
<i>Public Consultation</i> Staff and public consultation of minor policies of the council	1 year from closure
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Indexes and Registers of Complaints in summary form	Permanent
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Reports, returns and correspondence for detailed responses	6 years after administrative use concluded
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Routine responses	2 years after administrative use concluded
<i>Quality and Performance Management</i>	

Best Value review	5 years from closure
<i>Quality and Performance Management</i> Assessment Forms	2 years from closure
<i>Media relations</i> Media reports, press cuttings	3 years from closure

Housing/Housing Options

Service Area	Documentation	Retention Period
Council Housing Register	Application Forms	7 years after closure
	Supporting Papers	7 years after closure
	Correspondence	7 years after closure
	Notes re: decision	7 years after closure
	Mutual Exchanges	7 years after closure
	Reviews/Appeals	7 years after closure
Tenancy Management		
	Tenancy Agreement/Permissions Letter	Forever
	Supporting Documentation / Lettings Pack	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	Correspondence/old HR applications	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	File notes, reviews including tenancy audits or decisions	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	Documentation/checklist	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	photos	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	Tenant and Household Details	Commencement of new tenant moving in
	Bank statement or card/Driving licence/NI proof	at first tenancy review within first month
	Void works order form	Commencement of new tenant moving in
Notice to Quit	last tenant but one	
Homeless/Housing Advice		
	Homeless Case Files	7 years after decision last action
	Supporting Papers	7 years after decision last action
	Correspondence	7 years after decision last action
	Notes re: decision	7 years after decision last action
	Reviews/Appeals	7 years after decision last action

Sheltered Housing		
	Case Files	2 years following tenancy termination
	Supporting Papers	2 years following tenancy termination
	Correspondence	2 years following tenancy termination
	Notes re: decision	2 years following tenancy termination
	Review Documentation	2 years following tenancy termination
Repairs		
	Programmed/Cyclical Works	7 years following end of contract
	Responsive Repairs	7 years following end of contract
	DDA Applications	1 year following works complete
	Correspondence including Recharges	once recharge has been settled
	Supporting Documentation	when tenancy ends
	Asbestos Reports	forever
	Photos of property	forever
Housing General	Insurance Claim /Documentation	7 years after all obligations are concluded (or until the claimant is 25 whichever is greater following conclusion of the incident
Sale of Council Houses	Right to Buy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale documents • Agreement concerning sales 	15 years after sale of house
	Home Improvement Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement to pay loan • Details of payments • Correspondence relating to loan 	6 years after last payment with grant under £50,000 12 years with grant over £50,000
	Plans of new properties	Retain for life of property + 12 years
	Sale of Property Legal documents, particulars of sale, board of survey, tender documents, conditions of contracts	15 years after all obligations/entitlements are concluded

Human Resources

Documentation	Retention Period
Recruitment Records Non Short listed Applicants Applications, internal notes reports, CV's.	6 months from date of application
Recruitment Records Short listed Applicants not appointed Applications, interview reports, CV's.	6 months from date advised of the appointment decision
Application Form of Appointed person	6 years from end of employment
Employment records* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Letter • Employment Contract • Details of Assigned duties • Medical Clearance • Medical Examinations/Reports • PPDPs • Probation reports • Proof of Educational Qualifications • Secrecy Undertakings • Variation to Contract • Notice Letters 	6 years from end of employment
Records relating to staff working with children*	25 years from end of employment
All other records*	6 years from end of employment
Training History	6 years from end of employment
Health Information exposure to asbestos	40 years from date of exposure
Copies of Decrees absolute Copies of Marriage Certificates	6 years from end of employment
Pension Estimates and awards	6 years from end of employment
Statutory Maternity Pay	6 years from end of employment
Staff Lists & Leavers Lists	Permanent

*** See section on Health & Safety for additional time scales if employees affected by Health and Safety Issues**

Facilities Management (incl. Emergency Planning)

Documentation	Retention Period
Corporate Asset Management Plan Corporate buildings database – (GGP)	Permanent
Corporate reports on property matters	Permanent
Plans – land flooding and drainage	Permanent
Plans – footpaths, bridleways, highways, parks & woods	Permanent
Plans - foul, sewer, ditches & dykes	Permanent
Plans of existing buildings	Permanent
Land terrier maps	Permanent
Asbestos records	Permanent
Records of statutory inspections and servicing	Retain for life of property + 7 years
Plans of new corporate properties	Retain for life of property + 12 years
Corporate Properties refurbishment/development/ planned maintenance specifications, plans, installation manuals, certificates of approval	Retain for life of Property + 7 years
Corporate Properties work orders, tender documents, conditions of contract	7 years after the conclusion of the transaction that the record supports.
Corporate properties reactive repairs records	7 years after the conclusion of the transaction that the record supports.
Corporate properties cleaning records	7 years after the conclusion of the transaction that the record supports
Contracts & SLAs - documentation relating to the procurement of goods, works or services	7 years after the conclusion of the transaction that the record supports.

Corporate Emergency Response Plan Specific Emergency Response plans	Permanent
Emergency Planning Records of results from testing emergency response plan	10 years after closure
Emergency Planning Documentation relating to response to major incidents in the local community	Permanent
Emergency Planning Documentation relating to response in minor incidents in the local community	7 years after closure of incident
Business Continuity Corporate Business Continuity Plan Corporate Business Impact Assessments	3 years following expiry date of documents
Business Continuity Records of results from testing the corporate BC plan	Permanent
Business Continuity Documentation relating to response to major BC incidents	Permanent
Business Continuity Documentation relating to response to minor BC incidents	3 years after closure of incident

Planning Building Control and Land Charges

Documentation	Retention Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure Plan • Local Plan • Town Centre Plans • Unitary Development Plans <p>Consultation documents and replies, inquiries and objections made, public inquiry documents relating to the above</p>	Permanent
<p><i>Historical Buildings monuments and ecology at Specific Sties</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site and Monument Records • Ecological records • Species Records • Historically Listed buildings • Definitive Map • Commons registration 	Permanent

Planning Scheme controls and amendments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful waste Planning application • Successful Mineral Planning application • Amendments to definitive Map • Mineral register • Applications for mineral extraction • Land Use Surveys 	Permanent
Planning Scheme controls and amendments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation – waste planning and mineral planning applications • Objections • Inquiries • Archaeological advice/conditions 	15 years after decision
Tree Preservation Orders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of applications for consent • Decisions made • Compensation granted • Directions for replanting 	For as long as T.P.O. is in force Permanent
Planning Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I Register of applications for planning permission 	Until Application disposed of
Planning Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part II Register of applications for planning permission. Register must include a copy of application, drawings, decision of council/secretary of state Subsequent approval Planning obligation or s.278 agreement	Permanent

<p>Planning Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part II Register of planning permissions granted by the secretary of state on appeal against enforcement notices (must include particulars of development concerned the land on which it was carried out, copy of decision letter and any planning obligation or s.278 agreement) 	<p>Permanent</p>
<p>Planning Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning application files (excludes certificate of lawfulness applications) Documentary evidence submitted in support of Certificate of Lawfulness applications 	<p>Permanent</p>
<p>Planning Applications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary documents used to make a decision – Example: neighbour consultation responses. Supporting documents for developments that are finished, without s106 negotiations, enforcement, or similar activity – Example: Officer reports for Householder and Minor developments. Supporting documents for significant developments that are finished – Example: Statutory consultee responses to major developments, infrastructure. Documents required for the statutory registers – Example: Approved plans, enforcement notices, decision notices (and planning conditions contained within them), the effect of any decision made following appeal. 	<p>Until Application disposed of</p> <p>Remove from website and destroy after 4 years for delegated decisions 6 years for committee decisions</p> <p>Remove from website and public registers Keep in case of fire, accident, or similar investigation</p> <p>Permanent</p>

<p>Building Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of notices and certificates given to the council under part II of the Building Act 1984 	<p>Permanent</p>
<p>Building Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building notices • Plans • Inspection Reports • Specifications • Correspondence • Applications • Objections • Inspection Records • Diaries • Certificate of final Inspection 	<p>15 years from issue of final certificate</p>

Financial Services and Audit

Documentation	Retention Period
Accounts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated annual reports • Consolidated financial statements • Statement of financial position • Operating Statements • General Ledger 	Permanent
<i>Accounts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated monthly and quarterly reports and reconciliations • Working Papers for the above 	Destroy when administrative use is concluded
System documents and reports for all audits (i.e. Terms of Reference, Control Matrix, Final Report)	After 6 years to establish if it is still relevant. If yes, continue to review every 2 years, if no destroy.

<i>Audit Planning and Management</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessments • Risk Assessments • Resource Schedules • Audit Plans • Auditors' time recording records • Performance information about the delivery of audits • Team performance indicators • Independent quality reviews of files 	Current year plus three previous years
<i>Benchmarking</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPFA and other benchmarking data 	Current year plus three previous years
<i>Financial Systems Audits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit files containing working papers except system documents and reports 	Current year plus six previous years
<i>Non-Financial Systems Audits (except where criminal proceedings are pursued)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit files containing working papers except system documents and reports 	Current year plus three previous years
<i>Annual Performance Assessments</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of performance against CIPFA good practice guidance 	Current year plus three previous years
Estimates Supporting info, calculations, statistics	3 years after the end of the financial year to which they relate
Orders for Payment	Permanent
Debtors records	18 months after the end of the financial year to which they are paid or written off 6 years minimum in respect of any unpaid account which has not been written off
Taxation Records	5 years after the end of the financial year which records were created
VAT Records	6 years
<i>Receipt, Expenditure and Write off of public Monies</i>	6 years after the conclusion of the

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allowances• Work Orders• Invoices• Credit Card Statements• Cash Books• Receipts• Cheque Counterfoils• Bank Statements• Subsidiary ledgers (Annual)• Journals (annual)• Vouchers	transaction that the record supports
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Payroll Authority Sheets Payroll deduction authorities Payroll disbursement Employee pay records Employee taxation records	7 years after the conclusion of the financial transaction that the record supports
Budgets Annual Budget	Permanent
Budgets Draft budgets Departmental budgets Draft estimates	2 years after annual budget adopted
Loans Loan Register	Permanent
Loans Loan Files	7 years after loan been repaid
Local Authorities Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedules of acquisitions • Consolidated current asset reports • Annual reports • Summary of current assets • Asset registers 	Permanent
Local Authorities Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidiary asset registers 	7 years after the conclusion of the transaction that the record supports
Local Authorities Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine reports • Inventories • Stocktaking • Surveys of Usage • Acquisition and disposal reports and proposals 	2 years after administrative use is concluded
<i>Local Authorities Assets</i>	

<p><i>Acquisition and disposal of assets</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal documents relating to sale/purchase• Particulars of Sale• Board of survey• Leases• Applications for leases, licenses and rental revision• Tender documents• Conditions of contracts• Certificates of approval	<p>6 years if under £50,000 or 12 years if over £50,000 after all obligations/entitlements are concluded.</p>
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Environmental Health including Health and Safety

Documentation	Retention Period
Equipment Inspection Records	6 years from the destruction of the equipment
Radiation Monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to be in contact.	50 years from last action or at age 75 years whichever is greater
Asbestos monitoring of areas where employees and persons are likely to be in contact.	40 years from last action
Risk Assessments	3 years from last assessment
Accident Books (accidents relate to adults)	3 years from closure
Accident Books (accidents relate to children)	25 years from closure
Applications for animal registration	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Animal movement licenses	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Application for release of animals impounded	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Disabled Facilities Grant Applications	12 years
Food Hygiene Inspection Reports	6 years
Complaints	6 years
Notices	6 years
Prosecution Files	6 years
Potentially Violent Persons (PVP) Active Register	12 months after last review then transferred to Historic Register
Potentially Violent Persons (PVP) Historical Register	Maximum of 6 years since on the register
Sustainable Warmth / Green Homes Grants	10 years

Leisure

Documentation	Retention Period
Leisure Centre Membership subscriptions	Destroyed 1 month after subscription is cancelled <i>Please note our ability to do so is not possible without the upgrade of our Gladstone system</i>
STA Swim Academy subscriptions	Destroyed 1 month after subscription is cancelled <i>Please note our ability to do so is not possible without the upgrade of our Gladstone system</i>
STA Swim School applications	Destroyed 1 month after booking is cancelled
Adult and children activities	Destroyed 1 month after booking is cancelled
Direct debits forms and payment information	Paper base information destroyed 1 month after direct debit subscription starts Electronic information destroyed 1 month after subscription is cancelled
First Aid Reports and Documentation	Paper base document destroyed immediately after information is uploaded to the Councils recording system. Electronic copies destroyed 3 years after incident
Personal training	Destroyed 1 month after booking is cancelled
Club Bookings	Destroyed 1 month after booking is cancelled
Hall Bookings	Destroyed 1 month after booking is cancelled
Customer comments, compliments and complaints	<i>See Complaint Section</i>
GP Referral information	Destroyed 1 month after referral ends
Equipment and building inspection records	6 years from last assessment
Staff training records	6 years after end of employment
Risk assessments	6 years from last assessment
External customer training records for courses held	<i>Destroyed within 1 month after qualification expires – DB to check with external bodies / SW to discuss with legal services as information is provided to third parties i.e. Royal Life Saving</i>

Society etc.... to register successful applicants

Licensing

Documentation	Retention Period
Application for registration of a business premises	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Certificates of registration of Door supervisors, Beauty therapists, Taxi drivers	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Gaming Licenses	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Fire Certification	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Disabled Parking permits Blue Badge applications	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Registration to sell poison	2 years after registration or entitlement lapses
Licensing Diesel Licences Petroleum Licences Health and Safety Licensing Hazardous substances Contaminated land register/pollution	60 years after registration or entitlement lapses
<i>Notification</i> Notices relevant to breaches of licence conditions	2 years after matter concluded
<i>Monitoring/Investigating/inspections</i>	7 years after last action
Prosecution or sanction of an individual or company for failure to comply with license	7 years after last action

Legal and Contracts

Ref No	Documentation	Retention Period
	Documentation regarding legal advice	6 years from date wholly completed
	Litigation Files	6 years from completion of litigation
	Prosecution files	6 years from date of conviction
	Conveyancing files	12 years after last action
	Contracts Expressions of Interest	2 years after contract let or not proceeded with
	Contracts Development and specification of a contract	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
	Contracts Signed Contract	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
	Contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes and papers of meetings • Changes to requirements • Variation forms • Extension of contracts • Complaints • Disputes 	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
	Contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Service level agreements</i> • Compliance reports • Performance reports 	2 years after the terms of the contract have expired
	Tenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening notices • Tender envelopes 	1 year after start of contract
	Successful Tenders	6 years after terms of contract has expired

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Criteria • Tender Documents • Quotations 	12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
	Unsuccessful Tenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender Documents • Quotations 	1 year after start of contract
	<i>Post Tender</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of Contract • Post tender negotiation minutes 	1 year after terms of contract have expired
	Entries on Land Charges Register	Duration of Charge
	Copy's of official certificate of search re local land charges	Permanent (or min 20 years)
	Leases/counterpart leases Deeds of variation Licences to assign	Duration of lease plus 12 years
	Agreements under seal (except building/engineering work contracts)	Duration of agreement plus 12 years
	Building/engineering work contracts	15 years from performance of contract
	S106 agreements including Unilateral Undertakings S106 variations	Permanent

Revenues and Benefits

Documentation	Retention Period
Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit/Local Council Tax Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed claim form • Supporting evidence 	All Benefit records held electronically on Civica OPEN Revenues (Document Image System) since 2005
Council Tax and Business Rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuation and Rating Lists (schedule updates) • Correspondence (includes emails imported into Civica Document Image System) • Write offs • System Reports • Emails (Mailboxes) 	All Local Taxation records held electronically on Civica OPEN Revenues (Document Image system) since: 1993 for Council Tax. However, all closed Council Tax accounts with a nil balance, and with no transaction prior to 31/3/2000, have now been deleted. Further records will be deleted as part of an ongoing exercise. 2005 for Business Rates. All closed Business Rate accounts with a nil balance and no transaction prior to 31/3/2010 have now been deleted.
Magistrates' Court Lists – Council Tax and Business Rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed copies of Liability Orders for Local Taxation • Charging Order Copies 	Paper records held permanently.
Fraud cases (Housing Benefit)	Paper records destroyed after seven years
Accounts Receivable - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record Liability, Payment and Correspondence in administration of Sundry Debtors - accounts receivable (invoicing, collection, write offs and enforcement) 	Records held on main financial system (eFinancials) and paper records). Paper records destroyed after six years

Street Scene

Documentation	Retention Period
DVLA Driver Information	5 Years – hard copies shredded / electronic copies deleted
Complaints re fly tipping etc.. including educational letters	6 years following resolution of complaint or prosecution
Prosecution Files	6 Years – hard copies shredded / electronic copies deleted

Contracts and Tenders

Documentation	Retention Period
Contracts Development and specification of a contract	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
Contracts Signed Contract	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
Contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes and papers of meetings • Changes to requirements • Variation forms • Extension of contracts • Complaints Disputes	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
Contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Service level agreements</i> • Compliance reports Performance reports	2 years after the terms of the contract have expired
Tenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening notices Tender envelopes	1 year after start of contract
Successful Tenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Criteria • Tender Documents Quotations	6 years after terms of contract has expired 12 years after contract has expired if contract under seal
Unsuccessful Tenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender Documents Quotations	1 year after start of contract
<i>Post Tender</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of Contract Post tender negotiation minutes	1 year after terms of contract have expired

Complaints/Requests for Information/Surveys

Documentation	Retention Period
<i>Public Consultation</i> Staff and public consultation of significant policies of the council	5 years from closure
<i>Public Consultation</i> Staff and public consultation of minor policies of the council	1 year from closure
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Indexes and Registers of Complaints in summary form	Permanent
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Reports, returns and correspondence for detailed responses	6 years after administrative use concluded
<i>Enquiries and Complaints</i> Routine responses	2 years after administrative use concluded
<i>FOI /EIR Requests</i>	6 years from response or any appeal
<i>Survey Responses</i>	2 years after survey concluded and results published/no longer required

Staff Personnel Records

Documentation	Retention Period
Employment records* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Letter • Employment Contract • Details of Assigned duties • Medical Clearance • Medical Examinations/Reports • PPDPs • Probation reports • Proof of Educational Qualifications • Secrecy Undertakings • Variation to Contract • Notice Letters 	6 years from end of employment
Records relating to staff working with children*	25 years from end of employment
All other records*	6 years from end of employment
Training History	6 years from end of employment
Health Information exposure to asbestos	40 years from date of exposure

ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Documentation	Anticipated Retention Period
Emails	Deleted by staff in line with IT Policy. All documents not used for over 7 years old and no longer required to be deleted
Documents on H Drive	Reviewed Annually by Staff – all documents not used for over 7 years old and no longer required to be deleted
Documents on S Drive	Reviewed Annually by Managers – all documents

	not used for over 7 years old and no longer required to be deleted
Housing Tenant Records on Ohms CIVICA?	7 years after no longer tenant and no debt remaining – all sensitive information deleted as far as possible. All other information archived/deleted as far as IT system allows.
Housing Repairs records on OHMS CIVICA?	All personal data removed after 7 years.
Housing Abrisas	7 years from closure of account or last decision made. All information will be either archived or deleted as far as IT system allows.
Electronic Records	all documents not used for over 7 years old and no longer required to be deleted or archived as far as software allows with access to retrieve from any archive limited to minimal members of staff

General Guidelines

Documentation	Retention Period
Statutory Registers	Permanent
Strategy Documents	Permanent
Back ground Documents for reports, meetings etc	6 years from date of meeting/matter completed
Documentation relating to any matter where there is potential for dispute/litigation and the documentation concerned could be relevant to resolving or defending any action	6 years from date matter completed
Documentation where realistically no scope for dispute or litigation	12 months from end of financial year matter completed
Any documents relevant to a complaint made either to council or Ombudsman	Until complaint resolved/withdrawn then review.

Appendix 2 Flowchart of Retention Disposal Protocol



