

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The guidelines set out in this document support the Council's Data Protection Policy and assist us in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation, & The Data Protection Act 2018 and other associated legislation.
- 1.2 It is important that the 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 The 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 vital to support the work that the Council do and the services that it provides to its 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 Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
 - Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily. This will assist them as they carry out their daily duties, or if searching for information requested under the Freedom of Information Act.
 - Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations. Materials retained by our archive are covered by the Lindfield Archives Policy.

3. Scope

- 3.1 For the purpose of this Strategy, '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

- 4.1 The 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. This document provides a framework for good practice requirements for retaining information.
 - Personal information will be retained in locked filing cabinets; access to these documents will only be by authorised personnel.
 - Disclosure information will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Clerk's Office.
 - Appropriately dispose of information that is no longer required.
 - Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that confidential and sensitive information is securely destroyed.

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- Information about unidentifiable individuals is permitted to be held indefinitely for historical, statistical or research purposes e.g. Equalities data.
- Wherever possible, only one copy of any personal information will be retained, and that will be held within the Clerk's Office.

5. Breach of Policy and Standards

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

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1 The Clerk has overall responsibility for the policy.
- 6.2 The Clerk is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy, including ad-hoc checks to ensure compliance.
- 6.3 Other delegated staff are responsible for ensuring their records are kept and destroyed in line with this policy.
- 6.4 The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the guidelines set out in this policy are adhered to and to ensure that any documents disposed of are done so in accordance with their 'sensitivity' (i.e. whether they are normal waste or 'Confidential Waste').

7 Confidential Waste

- 7.1 Fundamentally, any information that is required to be produced under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations is available on the website or is open to public inspection and should NOT be treated as confidential waste.
- 7.2 However, any information that is protected by the Data Protection Act or is confidential under the Council's Constitution should be treated as confidential waste for disposal purposes.
- 7.3 Examples of what constitutes confidential waste:
- Exempt information contained within committee reports.
 - Files containing the personal details of an individual and files that predominantly relate to a particular individual or their circumstances. For example, completed application forms and letters.
 - Materials given to us on a 'confidential' or on a limited use basis e.g. material provided by contractors or the police.
- 7.4 Examples of what does not constitute confidential waste:
- Documents that are available to the public via our website or by submitting an appropriate search request to us for general information.
 - All reports and background papers of matters taken to the Committee in public session, unless specifically exempt

8. Disposal of Documentation

- 8.1 Confidential waste which clearly shows any personal information or information which can be identified using the parameters set out in 7.3 will be

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- a) shredded within the council buildings, or
- b) shredded by a third party who complies with all the following:
 - The provider must be ICO registered
 - The provider must carry out the shredding to a minimum of BS15713:2009 standards
 - The provider must issue a Certificate of Destruction for destroyed materials.

8.2 Certificates of Destruction will be kept by the council indefinitely.

9. Retention

9.1 Timeframes for retention of documents have been set using legislative requirements and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Professional Development (CIPD) guidelines.

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

9.3 Disclosure information relating to Disclosure and Barring Checks must be kept securely in a locked cabinet. Only those entitled to see it in the course of their duties should have access. The security and confidentiality of all Disclosure information is closely registered under the Police Act 1997.

9.4 Disclosure information must not be retained for a period of more than six months and must be destroyed in a secure manner using the shredder in the office.

9.5 Any unauthorised employee accessing or attempting to access Disclosures or Disclosure information or personnel records will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

9.6 The attached 'Appendix' shows the minimum requirements for the retention of documents as determined by those officers responsible for the management of these particular 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'

10 Storage and Access

10.1 Disclosure information is kept separately from personnel files and in securely lockable, nonportable cabinet with access strictly controlled and limited to the Clerk, and/or the Senior Assistant.

11. Handling

11.1 The Council complies with s124 of the Police Act 1997, so that Disclosure Information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. The Council maintains a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure Information has been revealed and recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

11.2 Personal information will only be available to those who are authorised officers.

11.3 Customers details and information will be kept up to date and reviewed annually by an authorised officer.

12 Usage

12.1 Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's/employee's consent has been given. Disclosure Information will be shared between different areas of the Council, if necessary.

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- 12.2 Where Disclosure information is shared with anyone other than the Clerk, the Senior Assistant and the direct Manager the employee must be given a reason why this information is being shared.

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

APPENDIX A - Recommended Document Retention Timescales

The retention period should be the specified number of years plus the current financial period (i.e., three years plus the current period); therefore, at least three years of documentation will always be retained at any given point in time.

This list is not exhaustive; if you are unsure about any document, contact the Parish Clerk or the Deputy Parish Clerk for clarification.

Document Retention Period

Finance

Financial Published Final Accounts	Indefinitely
Signed Audited Accounts	Indefinitely
Final Account working papers	5 years
Records of all accounting transactions held by the Financial Management System	At least 5 years
Cash Books (records of monies paid out and received)	6 years
Purchase Orders	6 years
Cheque Payment Listings (Invoices received)	6 years
Payment Vouchers Capital and Revenue (copy invoices)	6 years
BACS listings	6 years
Goods received notes, advice notes and delivery notes	1 year
Copy receipts	6 years
Petty cash vouchers and reimbursement claims	6 years
Debtors and rechargeable works records	6 years
Expenses and travel allowance claims	6 years
Asset Register for statutory accounting purposes	10 years
Journal Sheets	5 years
Ledger / Trial Balance	10 years
Year-end ledger tabulations – ledger details and cost updates	5 years
Published Budget Books	IndefinitelyMedium Term
Financial Plan	Indefinitely
Budget Estimates – Detailed Working Papers and summaries	1 years
Bank Statement (Disk Space) and Instructions to banks	6 years
Bank Statements (Hardcopy)	6 years
Banking Records including Giro cheques, bills of exchange and other negotiable instruments	6 years
Prime evidence that money has been banked	6 years
Refer to Drawer (RD) cheques	2 years
Cancelled Expenditure cheques	2 years
Bank Reconciliation	3 years
Cheques presented / drawn on the Council bank accounts	3 years
Prime records that money has been correctly recorded in the Councils financial systems	3 years
Grant/Funding Applications & Claims	5 years
Precept Forms	Indefinitely
Internal Audit Plans/ Reports	3 years
Fees and Charges Schedules	5 years
Time sheets and overtime claims	6 years
Payroll and tax information relating to employees	6 years
Payroll costing analysis	2 years
Records of payment made to employees for salaries / wages (including intermediate payslips)	6 years

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Statutory end of year returns to Inland Revenue and Pensions Section	Indefinitely
Loans and Investment Records; temporary loan receipts and loan Tabulations	6 years (after redemption of loan)
VAT, Income Tax and National Insurance Records	6 years
Current and expired insurance contracts and policies	indefinitely
Insurance records and claims	6 years
Capital and contracts register	Indefinitely
Final accounts of contracts executed under hand	6 years from completion of Contract
Final accounts of contracts executed under seal	12 years from completion of Contract
All Other reconciliations	3 years

Personnel

Unsuccessful application forms	6 months
Unsuccessful reference requests	1 year
Successful applications forms and CVs	Duration of employment +2 years
References received	Duration of employment +2 years
Statutory sick records, pay, calculations, certificates etc.	Duration of employment +2 years
Annual leave records	Duration of employment +2 years
Unpaid leave/special leave	Duration of employment +2 years
Annual appraisal/assessment records	Current year and previous 2Years
Time Control Records	2 years
Criminal Records Bureau Checks	6 months
Personnel files and training records	2 years after employment ceases
Disciplinary or grievance investigations – proved	
- Verbal	6 months
- Written	1 year
- Final warning	18 months
- Anything involving children	permanently
Disciplinary or grievance investigations – unproven	Destroy immediately after investigation or appeal
Statutory Maternity/Paternity records, calculations, certificates etc.	3 years after the tax year in which the maternity period ended
Wages/salary records, overtime, bonuses, expenses etc.	6 years

Corporate

Minutes and reports of Committee meetings	Indefinitely
Minutes and reports for Special Committee meetings	Indefinitely
Minutes and reports of sub-committees	Indefinitely
Notes and reports of working groups	Indefinitely
Policies and procedures	Until updated or reviewed
Asset Management records	Indefinitely
Asset management reports	Indefinitely
Internal audit records	3 years
Internal audit fraud investigation	7 years from date of final outcome of investigation
Risk register	Indefinitely
Risk management reports	Indefinitely
Performance reports	Indefinitely
Equalities data	Indefinitely
Questionnaire data	Indefinitely
Details regarding burials	Indefinitely
Fuel usage records	3 years
Allotment application forms	Length of Tenancy + 1 years
Allotment agreements	Length of Tenancy + 1 years
Pre-tender qualification document Summary list of expression of interest received Company Contacts A summary of any financial or technical evaluation supplied with the expressions of interest Initial application	1 year

Lindfield Parish Council
Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Successful tender documentation	Life of contract	6 years
Unsuccessful tender documentation		Until final payment is made
Deeds of land and property		Indefinitely
Land and property rental agreements		6 years after expiry of the agreement
Property evaluation lists		Indefinitely
Lease agreements, variation and valuation queries		6 years after the expiry of the agreement
Documentation referring to externally funded projects		6 years
Booking diaries		2 years
Electronic booking information	Is held in the system indefinitely due to the need to gather statistical information	Indefinitely
Premises License applications		Indefinitely

Health & Safety

Health and Safety Accident books (Blank)		3 years after the date of the last entry (unless an accident involving chemicals or asbestos is contained within)
Medical records containing details of employee exposed to asbestos or as specified by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999		40 years from the date of the last entry
Medical examination certificates		4 years from date of issue
Records relating to accidents person over 18 years		3 years from date of accident
Records relating to accidents person under 18 years		Until 21st birthday
Asbestos records for premises/property including survey and removal records		40 years
Parks and play area inspection reports		5 years
All inspection certificates (Gas Safe, FENSA etc.)		2 years
Repairs job sheets		2 years
Periodic machinery inspection tests (PAT, equipment calibration etc.)		2 years
Warranties		10 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of general waste		3 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of hazardous waste		10 years
Plant and equipment testing		2 years
Risk Assessment Forms		2 years
Unusual Incident Forms		3 years
Manual Handling Assessment Forms		3 years

Additional Items

Approved Minutes		Indefinite
Draft/Rough notes taken at meeting		Until draft minutes are produced
Correspondence (general letters & emails)		1 year

Note

- Speculative correspondence, unless deemed useful, will be deleted/disposed of immediately.

Adopted 12 March 2026