



SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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DATA RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

Introduction

The Council accumulates a vast amount of information and data during the course of its everyday activities. This includes data generated internally in addition to information obtained from individuals and external organisations. This information is recorded in various different types of documents.

Records created and maintained by the Council are an important asset and as such measures are undertaken to safeguard this information. Properly managed records provide authentic and reliable evidence of the Council's transactions and are necessary to ensure it can demonstrate accountability.

Documents may be retained either in printed paper form referred to as "Hard Copy" or in electronic forms. For the purpose of this policy, "document" and "record" refers to both hard copy and electronic records.

It is imperative that documents are retained for an adequate period of time. If documents are destroyed prematurely, the Council and individual officers concerned could face prosecution for not complying with legislation. This could cause operational difficulties, reputational damage and difficulty in defending any claim brought against the Council.

However, the Council should not retain documents longer than necessary. Timely disposal should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Scope and Objective of the Policy

The aim of this document is to provide a working framework to determine which documents are:

- retained and for how long; or
- disposed of and if so by what means.

Document retention protocol

Before disposal of any documents they will be reviewed in accordance with the following:

- Is retention required to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements?
- Is retention required to meet the operational needs of the Council?
- Is retention likely to be required as evidence in the event of a dispute?
- Is retention desirable because the document or record is of historic or intrinsic value?

When documents are scheduled for disposal the method of disposal should be appropriate to the nature and sensitivity of the documents concerned. A record of the disposal will be kept to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Documents can be disposed of by any of the following methods:

- Non confidential records: place in waste bin for disposal
- Confidential records or records giving personal information: shred
- Deletion of computer records by secure means
- Transmission of records to an external body such as the County Records Office.