

**LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL**

**DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY**

Adopted: - 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Leigh on Mendip Parish Council processes a wide variety of documents to transact its business. This policy describes both the storage and destruction policies of parish council records and documents that are necessary to comply with legal and regulatory obligations.

#### SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained on paper or electronically or other medium as appropriate.

The Policy is applicable to all Parish Councillors and employees of the Parish Council.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the current regulations. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, who is required to manage the Council's records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information is secured stored while it is valid and securely destroyed when it is no longer required according to the schedule that follows.

Parish Councillors are required to pass all documents and records whether received electronically or in hard copy to the Parish Clerk for retention in accordance with this policy and in the event of a Parish Councillor resigning or failing to retain their post as a result of an election, it is the Parish Councillor's responsibility to ensure anything that remains within their possession but is related to the business of the Parish Council is passed to the Parish Clerk within 10 working days of ceasing to hold the position of a Parish Councillor.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING POLICIES

This policy complies with

Freedom of Information Policy/Publication Scheme

Data Protection Policy

Privacy Policy

And with other legislation or regulations relating to work of the Parish Council.

#### RETENTION SCHEDULE

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates 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 is expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Cemetery</b>			
Register of Burials	Indefinite		Management
Map of plots	Indefinite		Management
Register of purchased/reserved plots	Indefinite		Management
Applications for internments	Indefinite		Management
Application for right to erect a memorial	Indefinite		Management
Disposal Certificates	Indefinite		Management
Exclusive rights of Burial Grants	Indefinite		Management
General Correspondence	1 year from resolution	Destroy	Management
<b>Councillors</b>			
Declaration of Acceptance	4 years or until they vacate office.	Destroy	Management
Members register of interests	Lodged with Somerset Council.	Destroy	Legal compliance
Members' and employees' allowances and expenses	7 years	Destroy	Tax/Audit

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Data Protection / Freedom of Information</b>			
Information Audit	For as long as it is useful or relevant	Destroy	Management
Registrations	For as long as it is useful or relevant	Destroy	Management
Data Access Requests	1 year from supply of data	Destroy	Management
Freedom of Information Requests	1 year from supply of information	Destroy	Management
<b>Finance and Payroll</b>			
Annual Accounts	Indefinite		Archive
Annual Return (Audit)	Indefinite		Archive
Asset Register	Indefinite		Management
Bank statements	7 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Cheque book stubs	2 years from last completed audit	Destroy	Audit/Management
Fees and charges (Cemetery, allotments etc)	5 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Quotation and tenders (unsuccessful)	2 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Quotation and tenders (successful)	12 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Invoices	7 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Paying in book stubs	2 years from last completed audit	Destroy	Audit/Management
Purchase Orders	7 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
Receipt and payments accounts	Indefinite		Archive
Payroll, Tax and NI Records	7 years	Destroy	Audit/Management
VAT Records	7 years	Destroy	Audit/Management/VAT

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Health and Safety</b>			
Accident Reports	25 years from closure	Destroy	Management
Risk Assessments	Once superseded by a new risk assessment or is inactive	Destroy	Management
<b>Insurance</b>			
Insurance policies/schedules	While valid	Destroy	Insurance
Insurance Claim Records	7 Years after closure (Allowing for claimant to reach age 25)	Destroy	Insurance/Audit/Legal
<b>Legal</b>			
Deeds, conveyances, leases, agreements, and contracts	Indefinite		Management/archive/legal
Documents for legal Purposes: Breach of Trust Contract Defamation Leases Negligence Personal injury Rent Sums recoverable by statute To recover land	12 months 6 years 1 year 12 years 6 years 3 years 6 Years 6 years 12 years	Destroy	Legal
Trust Documents	Indefinite		Legal/audit

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Minutes and correspondance</b>			
Agendas	Until publication of approved minutes	Destroy	Management
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	Until publication of approved minutes	Destroy	
Approved Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Management/archive/legal
Draft Minutes	Until the minutes have been accepted.	Destroy	
Complaints	3 years from resolution	Destroy	Management
General correspondence and information not covered elsewhere	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Management

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>			
Documents, plans, maps or articles having local or historic interest Magazines, journals, advertising material published by or on behalf of the Parish Council	For as long as useful		Management/archive
Reports and Newsletters	For as long as useful	Destroy	Management/archive
Public Consultation: surveys/questionnaires	5 years	Destroy	Management
Policy Documents	Until superseded	Destroy	
<b>Personnel</b>			
Application Forms (interviewed – unsuccessful)	6 months	Destroy	Management
Personnel Records, Contracts	6 years after ceasing employment	Destroy	Management
Training Records	Records Term of office or period of employment plus 6 months.	Destroy	Management
Correspondence relating to staff	Term of employment plus 7 years	Destroy	

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>RETENTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>REASON</b>
<b>Planning</b>			
Planning application correspondence received from residents.	6 months year after grant/refusal or appeal	Destroy	Management
Planning applications	All planning applications and relevant documents and decision notices are retained by and available from Somerset Council	Destroy	Management
Parish and Neighbourhood Plans and similar documents	For as long as they are in force plus 2 years		Management

### **Disposal Procedures**

All documents that are no longer required for administrative purposes will be shredded and disposed of securely.