

## NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL

### DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT & ARCHIVE POLICY

#### 1. Introduction

This policy guides the management and timely disposal of correspondence files and other Town Council documents. This policy also guides members of the public as to what documents are readily available for requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

#### 2. Scope

The policy applies to all documents produced by the Town Council. Reviewing and disposal of all such documents will take place on an annual basis. Documents produced by and readily available from other sources will be destroyed when they are outdated or superseded.

#### 3. Policy

The following documents will be retained for the periods stated and the reasons given:

| DOCUMENT                                   | MINIMUM PERIOD OF RETENTION | REASON                              |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Minute books                               | Indefinite                  | Historical                          |
| Scale of fees and charges                  | 6 years                     | Management                          |
| Annual audited accounts                    | Indefinite                  | Historical                          |
| Receipt books                              | 6 years                     | VAT                                 |
| All bank statements                        | Last completed audit year   | Audit                               |
| Bank paying in books                       | Last completed audit year   | Audit                               |
| Cheque book stubs                          | Last completed audit year   | Audit                               |
| General quotations/tenders                 | 6 years                     | Statute of Limitations              |
| Paid invoices                              | 6 years                     | VAT                                 |
| Paid cheques                               | 6 years                     | Statute of Limitations              |
| Sundry debtor                              | 6 years                     | VAT                                 |
| VAT records                                | 6 years                     | VAT                                 |
| Petty cash                                 | 6 years                     | Tax, VAT, statute of limitations    |
| Timesheets                                 | Last completed audit year   | Audit and Working Time Regulations  |
| Salaries/wages records                     | 12 years                    | Superannuation                      |
| Employers Liability Insurance              | Indefinite                  | Management & Statute of Limitations |
| Public Liability Insurance                 | Indefinite                  | Management & Statute of Limitations |
| Health and Safety Records                  | 21 years                    | Management & Statute of Limitations |
| Investment Records                         | Indefinite                  | Audit, Management                   |
| Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts | Indefinite                  | Audit, Management                   |
| Members allowances registers               | 6 years                     | Tax, Statute of Limitations         |

At the end of the stated periods, the files will be destroyed.

#### 4. General Documentation

Other than those documents stated under point 3, general documentation will be destroyed after 6 years. Any documents of a historical nature will be offered to the County Records Office for safe keeping. Any documents relating to Town Council land and property will be retained indefinitely by the Town Council to give a complete overview of refurbishments, disposals or acquisitions.

General e-mails (in relation to day-to-day business and projects) are filed and retained for a period of 2 years.

**5. Handwritten notes and Audio/Video recordings from meetings**

Handwritten notes and audio/video recordings from meetings will be destroyed immediately after they have served their purpose i.e. once the draft minutes from the relevant meeting have been formally approved.

**6. Development Control (Planning)**

If a particular planning application forms part of a Town Council owned property then the application will be kept indefinitely or until such times as the site is developed.

**7. Personnel Documents**

A basic level of information will be permanently retained on all employees. (e.g. length of time employed, courses attended etc.) If a member of staff leaves the employment of the Town Council and there is likely to be a claim made against the Town Council under employment or other relevant legislation, the personnel file will be archived until such time as any claim has been dealt with or legal advice states that it may be destroyed.

**8. Storage of Retained Documents**

Retained documents will be stored on the Town Council's premises and archived to ensure easy retrieval. A review of the method of storage will be carried out periodically to ensure items continue to be accessible.

**9. Historical Information**

Documents and files kept for historical reasons will periodically be reviewed and offered to the County Records Office for safe keeping. This is to ensure that very old documents are kept in optimum conditions to ensure longevity.

**10. Destruction of Documents**

All documents earmarked for disposal will be sent for destruction by a recognised contractor specialising in this type of work. All documents will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that anything containing personal information covered by the Data Protection Act is sent for secure destruction by a recognised contractor.