

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY



Alton Town Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Town Council.

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by Alton Town Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Town 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 in hard copy or electronically.

A small percentage of Alton Town Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

Responsibilities

The Town Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Town Clerk who is required to manage the Council's records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner.

Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Town 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 Town 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.

Retention of Documents

Minutes	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	7 years	Audit/management
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Management
Paying in books	Last completed audit	Management
Quotations	7 years	Audit
Paid invoices	7 years	Audit/VAT
VAT records	7 years	Audit/VAT
Staffing/Salary records	7 years	Audit/legal
Tax & NI records	7 years	Audit
Insurance policies	Whilst valid	Audit
Cert of Employers Liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Cert of public liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit
Deeds, leases	Indefinite	Audit
Booking policy	7 years	Management
Copies of bills to hirers	7 years	Management/audit

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at East Hampshire District Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Town Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council minutes and are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained as stated below.

Declarations of acceptance	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Members register of interests' book	Term of office + 1	Management
Complaints	1 year	Management
General information	3 months	Management
Routine correspondence & e-mails	6 months	Management

Digital recordings of Council Meeting

From April 2020 – May 2021 all remote Full Council and Committee Meetings were recorded for auditing purposes. We have been advised by the Internal Auditor that these records can be deleted after the conclusion of the period for the exercise of public rights for the relevant auditing year. This period is legally defined as 14th June to 23rd July for 2021. (30 working days to include the first 10 working days of July.)

Any future meetings recorded by the Council will also adhere to this retention policy as listed above.

Disposal procedures: all documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and disposed of.