

# Rowlands Castle Parish Council

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## Document Retention and Disposal Policy

(as adopted at Full Council Mtg on 13 January 2025)

*This Policy follows SLCC's 2022 Template*

### Introduction

Rowlands Castle Parish Council (the Council) recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary in order to comply with legal and regulatory obligations, and to allow for its effective management. This Policy details how the records maintained by the Council are kept, and when they should be destroyed.

Records created and maintained by the Council are an important asset and such measures need to be 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 'hard' paper form, or in electronic form. For the purpose of this Policy, "document" and "record" refers to both hard copy and electronic records.

### Responsibilities

The Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records in line with regulatory requirements. The Council's Clerk has overall responsibility for the maintenance of all records and a periodic review of document should be undertaken to ensure that any unnecessary documentation being held is disposed of under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). All employees and councillors should be aware of this Policy.

### Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all records, in all formats that are created, received or maintained by the Council. The aim of this document is to provide a working framework to determine which documents are retained, and for how long, and which should be disposed of, and by what method.

### Relationship with Existing Policies

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Information and Data Protection Policy and Notice.

### Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FIA), the Council is required to maintain a Retention Schedule ('the Schedule') listing the records which it creates in the course of its business. The 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. Documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded

and disposed of. The Schedule in Appendix A has been adopted in line with the National Association of Local Council's legal topic note LTN40 (Local Council's documents and records) and provides guidance on the recommended minimum retention periods for specific classes of documents and records.

Whenever there is a possibility of litigation, the records and information that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has been removed.

### **Archived Documents**

Documents identified for indefinite retention should be sent to the Hampshire County Council Archives. A schedule identifying which documents have been archived should be kept by the Council.

### **Document Disposal**

Documents should only be disposed of if retention is not required to:

- Fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements
- Meet the operational needs of the service
- Evidence events in the case of dispute
- Provide historic or intrinsic value to the history of the Parish

When documents are identified for disposal, the method of disposal should be appropriate to their nature and sensitivity. All records containing personal or confidential information should be destroyed at the end of the retention period. Failure to do so could lead to prosecution under GDPR, FIA or could cause reputational damage.

Where computer records are deleted, steps should be taken to ensure that data is virtually impossible to retrieve, in line with the Information Commissioner's Office guidelines.

### **Review**

This document shall be reviewed periodically.

## Appendix A: Retention Schedule listing Documents for Retention or Disposal

### Meetings

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed paper copies of Council meetings must be kept indefinitely in safe storage. At regular intervals of no more than 5 years they must be archived and deposited with HCC Archives, Winchester
Agendas	5 years	Management	Bin
Minutes/Notes handwritten (including by members)	Until minutes agreed.	Management	Bin

### Finance

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
VAT Records	6 years or 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT	Shred
Asset Register	Indefinite	Management	
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Shred
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit	Shred
Cheque Book Stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Shred
Receipt and Payment Accounts	Indefinite	Archive	
Receipt Books	6 years	Management	Bin
Quotations and Tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Shred. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements.
Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT	Shred
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Shred
Grant applications to and by parish council	6 years	Audit, management	Shred
Wages Books/Payroll	12 years	Superannuation	Shred
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	

### Insurance

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
Insurance policies	While valid (but see next two items)	Management	Bin
Insurance company names and policy nos.	Indefinite	Management	

<b>Certificate for Insurance against liability for employees</b>	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753) Management	Bin
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### General Record Keeping

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
<b>To ensure records are easily accessible it is necessary to comply with the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of files stored in cabinets will be kept</li> <li>• Electronic files will be saved using relevant file names</li> </ul>	The electronic files will be stored in a cloud-based programme supplied by Council's IT company.	Management	Bin or confidential documents shredded. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements.
<b>General correspondence</b>	Unless relating to specific categories outlined in this schedule, paper and electronic correspondence should be kept for as long as they are needed, for reference or accountability purposes, and to comply with regulatory requirements and protect legal and other rights and interests.	Management	Bin or confidential documents shredded. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements
<b>Park equipment inspection reports</b>	21 years	Management	Bin
<b>CCTV Data</b>	Electronic correspondence should be kept for as long as it is needed, for reference or accountability purposes, and to comply with regulatory requirements and protect legal and other rights and interests.	Management. In conjunction with Council's Surveillance System Camera Policy.	Electronic material erased, permanently and securely. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements
<b>Local history information</b>	Indefinite. To be securely kept for the benefit of parish or forwarded to RC History & Heritage Society	Local Interest and Heritage	
<b>Documents from legal matters, negligence and other torts</b>	Most legal proceedings are governed by the Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. Where the limitation periods are longer than other periods specified, the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified. Some types of legal proceedings may fall within 2 or more categories. If in doubt, retain for the longest of the 3 limitation periods.		
<b>Planning Applications</b>	All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at East Hampshire District Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All parish council comments in connection with these applications are recorded on EHDC's planning portal, and in the council minutes which are retained indefinitely.		

## Staffing and Councillor Information

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
<b>Correspondence relating to staff</b>	If related to Audit (see section above) correspondence should be kept securely and personal data relating to staff should not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held. Recommend employment period plus 3 years.	After an employment has ended, council may need to retain and access records for former staff for the purposes of supplying references, payment of tax, NI contributions and pensions, and in respect of any related legal claims made against the council.	Shred. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements
<b>Interview Records</b>	6 months	Management	Shred
<b>Timesheets</b>	Last completed audit year plus 3 years	Audit (Best Practice)	Bin
<b>Applications for co-option (successful applicants)</b>	Term of office plus 1 year	Management	Shred
<b>Declarations of Acceptance of Office</b>	Term of office plus 1 year	Management	Shred
<b>Members' Register of Interest</b>	Term of office plus 1 year	Management	Shred

## Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Development Plan

<i>Document</i>	<i>Minimum Retention Period</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
<b>Minutes</b>	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed paper copies of Council meetings must be kept indefinitely in safe storage. At regular intervals of no more than 5 years they must be archived and deposited with HCC Archives, Winchester
<b>Development Plan Document 2022-2033</b>	Indefinite	Archive	
<b>Plan Appendices</b>	Indefinite	Archive	
<b>General Correspondence</b>	Unless relating to specific categories outlined in this schedule, paper and electronic correspondence should be kept for as long as they are needed, for reference or accountability purposes, and to comply with regulatory requirements and protect legal and other rights and interests.	Management	Bin or confidential documents shredded. Retain a list of documents disposed of in order to meet GDPR requirements