

4 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Code of Practice on the management of records), the following recommended practice has been adopted in relation to the retention, management and disposal of Enborne Parish Council's documents and records.

Good records and information management benefits those requesting information because it provides some assurance that the information provided will be complete and reliable. It benefits those holding the requested information because it enables them to locate and retrieve it easily within the statutory timescales or to explain why it is not held. It also supports control and delivery of information promised in Enborne Parish Council's Publication Scheme or required to be published by the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the EIR) and in accordance with Standing Orders.

4.2 GOOD PRACTICE

Good practice in records management is made up of a number of key elements:

- a. Enborne Parish Council should have in place a formal records management policy, with organisational arrangements in place to support that policy.
- b. Enborne Parish Council should ensure it keeps the records it needs for business, regulatory, legal and accountability purposes.
- c. Records should be kept in systems that enable the records to be stored and retrieved as necessary.
- d. Enborne Parish Council should know what records it holds, where they are and that they remain usable for as long as they are required (i.e. that they can be retrieved, used and relied upon).
- e. Records should be stored securely, with access to them controlled.
- f. Enborne Parish Council should define how long it needs to keep particular records, should dispose of them when they are no longer needed and should be able to explain why records are no longer held (i.e. if they have been disposed of or transferred to a third party).
- g. Records shared with other bodies or held on their behalf by other bodies should be managed in accordance with the FOIA Code of Practice.
- h. Enborne Parish Council should monitor compliance with the FOIA Code of Practice and assess the overall effectiveness of the records management policy.
- i. The policy should be kept up-to-date so that it reflects the current needs of Enborne Parish Council, by reviewing it at agreed intervals, e.g. every year or after major organisational or technological changes.
- j. Enborne Parish Council should publish the policy so that members of the public can see the basis on which it manages its records.

4.3 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Requests for information can be made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). As a matter of good practice, the Information Commissioner's Office recommends that any requested information should be kept for at least 6 months after the date of the last communication about the request, to allow for appeals to the Information Commissioner (Source: ICO Practical guidance: Destruction of requested information).

4.4 ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS

Any communication received anonymously will be reported to Enborne Parish Council or a relevant Committee and action taken, if appropriate. Any anonymous letter or e-mail received will then be destroyed.

4.5 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

- Any hard copy documentation, whether by received by post or delivered by hand, is to be date stamped.
- All documents received are to be logged in the "post in" book.
- All documentation is to be read by the Clerk.
- The receiving officer is then to decide the appropriate action:
 - (a) Action under Clerk's delegated powers
 - (b) Put in Full Council Correspondence Tray to be listed on next Enborne Parish Council Agenda and then taken to next meeting
 - (c) Put in appropriate Committee Correspondence Tray to be listed on next Committee Agenda and then taken to next meeting
 - (d) Send to the Chairman of the Council for perusal and comment
 - (e) Forward to specific named Councillor
- The original document is to be filed in Enborne Parish Council records together with a copy of any reply or a note of the action taken (see Document Retention below).
- Letters to be sent are to be recorded in the "post out" log, weighed, stamped and posted (large items are to be taken to the Post Office for weighing).
- Signed minutes are to be taken to Berkshire Record Office annually after audit.

4.6 DOCUMENT RETENTION

Key: P = Preserve permanently; R = Review after Minimum retention Period; D = Destroy after Minimum retention Period

Record	Action	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Administration			
Signed Minutes of Council Meetings	P	Indefinite	Archives
Reports & other documents circulated with agendas not attached to signed Minutes	R	1 year	Archives
Agendas (normally)	D	1 year	Reference
Agendas (if Minutes do not survive)	P	Indefinite	Archives
Councillors' Declarations of Office	P	Indefinite	Archives
Byelaws and Orders	P	Indefinite	Audit, Mngmnt
Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts & Wayleaves	P	Indefinite	Audit, Mngmnt
Property registers & terriers, including register and plans for allotments	P	Indefinite	Audit, Mngmnt
Maps, plans & surveys of property owned by Enborne Parish Council	P	Indefinite	Archives
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	R	5 years	Archives
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments, and also planning appeal decisions	R	5 years	Reference
Planning Applications & related papers for minor works where permission is granted	D	Retain until notification of Approval by WBC	Reference
Planning Applications & related papers for minor works where permission is refused	D	Retain until appeal period has expired	Reference
Successful quotations and tenders for major works	R	12 years	Statute of limitation
Successful quotations and tenders for minor works	D	12 years	Statute of limitation
Unsuccessful tenders	D	3 years	Challenge
Routine correspondence, papers & e-mails	D	Retain as long as useful	

Record	Action	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Personnel records	D	Period of employment + 3 years	Limitation period
Health & Safety records including accident report sheets	D	21 years	Limitation period
Scale of Fees and Charges	D	5 years	Mngmnt
Insurance Policies	D	Retain while valid + 1 yr	Audit, Mngmnt
Employer's Liability Certificates	P	Retain for 40 years	Mngmnt
Finance			
Receipts and payments books	P	Indefinite	Archives
Investments	P	Indefinite	Audit, Mngmnt
Financial Returns to External Auditor	D	6 years	Audit
Internal Auditor Reports	D	6 years	Audit
Bank Statements, including deposit/saving accounts	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank Paying-in books and cheque book stubs	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Paid Invoices	D	6 years	VAT
Paid Cheques	D	6 years	Limitation period
VAT Records	D	6 years	VAT
Time Sheets	D	Last completed audit year	Audit
Salary Records	D	12 years	Limitation period
Records relating to parish halls, centres and recreation grounds; applications to hire, lettings diaries, copies of bills to hirers and records of payment	D	6 years	VAT
Miscellaneous			
Maps created under provision of the Rights of Way Act 1992	P	Indefinite	Archives
Community Magazines/News Letters	R	5 years	Archives
Parish magazines, press cuttings and photographs	P	Indefinite	Archives

Record	Action	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Any records dating from before 1894 now held by Enborne Parish Council	P	Indefinite	Historical
Records of other bodies such as burial boards, charities, fire brigades, home guard units, local societies and <i>ad hoc</i> committees	P	See under Admin and Finances	
Reports, Guides, handbooks etc received by Enborne Parish Council from other bodies	R/D	Retain as long as useful	