RYHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted: 11/05/2026
Reviewed in Accordance with Document Review Schedule

DATA RETENTION POLICY

Introduction

Ryhall Parish 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 Parish Council.

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 in hard copy or electronically.

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

Responsibilities

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and the Clerk 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 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, 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 regardless of the media in which they are stored.

Retention of Documents

The table below shows the documents / data the parish council is likely to hold, and the retention periods relating to each type of data, with a reason provided for each of the retention periods used. The retention periods are often stipulated or governed by statute or other provisions. Further information can be found in the references identified in this policy.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minute Book	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive

Receipt and Payment Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Certificate of Employer's Liability	Indefinite	Audit / Legal
Certificate of Public Liability	Indefinite	Audit / Legal
Allotments plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Asset Register	Indefinite (kept up to date)	Audit
Deeds, Leases, Investments	Indefinite	Audit / Management
Salary and Wages Records	12 years	Superannuation
Agenda Papers	6 years	Management
Receipts Books	6 years	VAT
Scale of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Cheque Book stubs (as a proxy for paid cheques)	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid Invoices	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	6 years (20 years for any VAT on rents)	VAT
Tax and National Insurance	6 years	Audit / Management / HMRC
Insurance Policies	6 years	Audit / Management / Legal
Lettings diaries & hire contracts relating to use of Council facilities, including football pitch	6 years	VAT
Timesheets	Last completed audit year, + 3 years	Audit / Personal Injury
Bank Statements	Last completed audit	Audit / Management
Paying in Books	Last completed audit	Audit / Management

Meeting Audio Recordings	Until the minutes are signed at the following meeting	Management
Employees' records	While Valid	Management
Electors' records (register, other schedules)	While Valid	Management
Correspondence not otherwise covered in this schedule	While Valid	Audit / Management / Other

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at South Kesteven District Council a link to SKDC website is provided on the website of Ryhall Parish Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish 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
- Members register of interests' book Term of Office + 1 year
- Complaints 1 year
- Routine correspondence and e-mails 6 months – these are noted on each Parish Council Agenda in list form
- General Information 3 months

Information register

The Parish Clerk will retain an information register identifying information held by the parish council and its disposal date.

Disposal procedures

All documents that have reached their disposal date and are no longer required for administrative reasons will be shredded and disposed of.

Electronic copies of documents will be deleted and removed from archived when they exceed their retention periods.

Retention of Documents for Legal Purposes

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, which depend upon the type of claim in question. The table below sets out the limitation periods for the different categories of claim:

Category of Claim	**Limitation Period**
Negligence (and other 'Torts')	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years

Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
Personal Injury	3 years
To Recover Land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

Where the limitation periods are longer than other periods specified in the retention table set out above, the documentation relating to any claim should be kept for the longer period specified.

References

- National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Legal Topic Note 40, September 2016, "Local Councils' Documents and Records"
- Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration
- NALC Model Financial Regulations
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulations (2018)
- Data Protection Bill 2017