**CODDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY**

Coddenham Parish Council recognises the efficient and effective management of its records is essential to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to assist in the satisfactory management of public business by the Parish Council. This Policy provides a framework through which this effective management and retention of public records can be achieved and properly audited.

**Scope**

This Policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council. Records are defined as all those documents which relate to the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its communications, transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

**Responsibilities**

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for maintaining this Policy is the Clerk and Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

The person responsible for records management will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this Policy so that information will be stored and retrieved easily, appropriately and timely.

The Clerk and Proper Officer must ensure that the records for which they are responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council’s records management guidelines.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If the Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the parish records, they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual Councillors are strongly advised to undertake ‘weeding’ and ‘housekeeping’ on a regular basis. On resigning from the Council Councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councillors should be aware that records that they may hold may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The Parish Council must also ensure its acts within the General Data Protection Regulations.

**Retention Schedule**

The Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing types of records which it creates or holds 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 will be expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when they are creating new record keeping systems.

The retention schedule refers to all Parish Council records irrespective of the media in which they are stored.

**MINIMUM RETENTION PERIODS**

**Document or Record Minimum Retention Period Reason**

**Minutes and Correspondence**

Signed Minutes of Council Meetings Indefinite Archive

Correspondence & papers on important local Indefinite Archive

Issues

Routine correspondence, papers & emails 1 year Audit

**Finance & Payroll**

Receipt & Payment accounts Indefinite Archive

Annual Return & Audited Accounts Indefinite Archive

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

Correspondence relating to audit matters Last completed audit year Audit

Budgetary Control Papers 2 years + Current year Audit

Quotations and Tenders 6 years Limitation Act 1980

(as amended)

Receipt Books of all Kinds Indefinite Archive

Paid Invoices 6 years VAT

Paid Cheques 6 years Limitation Act 1980

(as amended)

VAT Records 6 years (but 20 years on rents) VAT

Investments Indefinite Audit and

Management

Payroll Records Last completed audit year Audit

**Insurance Policies**

Certificate of Employers Liability 50 years Future Claims

Certificate of Public Liability 21 years Future Claims

Other Insurance Policies While valid or a claim can be made Management and

Legal Proceedings

Insurance Claim Records 7 years after all obligations concluded Management and

Legal Proceedings

Policy Renewal Records & correspondence While valid Management

**General Management**

Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts Indefinite Audit and

Management

**Allotments**

Register, plans, receipt books, scale of charges Indefinite Audit and

Management

**Health & Safety**

Accident Books (Injury to Adults) 50 years from closure Management and

Legal Proceedings

Accident Books (Injury to Children) 50 years from closure Management and

Legal Proceedings

Equipment Inspection Records 25 years Management

Premises Inspection Records 25 years Management

Risk Assessments 3 years from last assessment Management

**Members**

Register of Members Interests 18 months after individual ceases to Management

A Member

Register of Officers Interests Indefinite Archive

Member’s Allowances Register 6 years Tax, Limitation Act

1980 (as amended)

**Miscellaneous**

Complaints 2 years after closure of case Management

Press Releases 5 years Management

Public Consultation – surveys & returns 5 years Management

Reports, newsletters etc from other bodies Retain as long as useful Management

**Personnel/Human Resources**

Application Forms (interviewed – unsuccessful) 6 months Management

Disciplinary Records Retain for period of employment Management

Personal Files (not payroll information) 6 years after ceasing employment Management

General correspondence will be retained as long as relevant, the minimum period being 1 year.

An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and all items that have reached their deletion or destruction date being deleted/destroyed and the remainder being considered for archiving.

**Review date:** This Policy will be reviewed annually

**Approved and adopted at the Coddenham Parish Council Meeting held on:**

**Minute No:**