



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

- 1. Purpose:** Stotfold Town Council requires a wide variety of documents for transacting its business and is committed to retaining these documents in a format and for periods of time that enables the Town Council to meet its statutory obligations in respect of documents subject to legislation.

The document storage arrangement should:

- Ensure security of documents
 - Protect employees' privacy
 - Facilitate access to information
 - Optimise the use of storage space
 - Be cost effective
 - Facilitate the destruction of redundant documents
- 2. Scope:** This policy applies to users of Stotfold Town Council information records, both paper and electronic, it includes Councillors and employees.
 - 3. Statutory requirements:** Documents subject to a statutory period of retention are identified by their associated legislation in Annex A.
 - 4. Personal data:** In accordance with Data Protection legislation and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, personal data will not be retained for longer than necessary.
 - 5. Security of documents:** Stotfold Town Council records are held in paper and/or electronic format. To minimise the risk of accidental loss of valuable records, masters or copies (as deemed appropriate) will be stored off site.
 - 6. Employee's privacy:** The privacy of personnel records will be appropriate assured.
 - 7. Availability and access:** All records necessary to Stotfold Town Council's business will be retained for a period of time that reasonably assures the availability of records needed.
 - 8. Storage space and cost:** Redundant records may be destroyed in order to reduce the cost of storage, indexing and handling the vast quantity of documents that would otherwise accumulate. Destruction of documents will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of this policy to avoid any inference that a document was destroyed in anticipation of a problem.
 - 9. Electronic storage:** Records maintained electronically will be subject to the same rules of retention and security as paper records. This includes email correspondence.

10. Disposal of records: All records containing personal information, such as personal names and addresses, will be disposed of through shredding as confidential waste. Where the volume of documents is too large for Town Council facilities, other means of record destruction will be used, such as commercial services.

Non-confidential records, such as correspondence from other government bodies, trade publications, etc will be recycled as paper recycling.

Computer hardware will be professionally cleaned of data prior to disposal or the hardware will be destroyed.

11. Implementation of the policy: The Clerk will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.

12. Monitoring and review: The policy will be reviewed periodically to monitor its effectiveness.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Stotfold Town Council policies and documents:

- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Information Security Asset Inventory
- Stotfold Town Council Privacy Notice

ANNEX A

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Signed minutes of Council meetings (hard copies)	Indefinite	Archive
Scale of fees and charges	5 years	Management
Receipt and payment accounts (hard copy)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	12 years	Statute of Limitations
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Statute of Limitations
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
Wages books/payroll records	12 years	Superannuation
Pension records	6 years (except record of opt-outs – 4 years)	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date from when insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Members allowances	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Accident books	25 years from closure	Management
Equipment inspection records	25 years	Management
Premises inspection records	25 years	Management
Risk assessment	3 years from last assessment	Management
Register of Members interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a Member	Management
Complaints	5 years after closure of case	Management
Press releases	1 year	Management
Public consultation – survey and returns	3 years	Management
Reports, newsletters, etc	Retain as long as useful	Management
Correspondence	6 months	Management
Planning applications where granted, plans and decision letters	Held on CBC planning portal	Planning and enforcement
Appeal decision notices	Held on CBC planning portal	Planning and enforcement

Planning applications where refused, plans and decision letters	Held on CBC planning portal	Planning and enforcement
Structure plans, Local Plans and similar	As long as in force	Management
For halls, recreation grounds: Application to hire halls, recreation grounds, etc Copies of bills to hirers Lettings diaries	6 years	VAT
Allotments register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Allotments waiting list	As long as in force and updated	Management
Burial ground: Applications for interment Applications for right to erect memorials Copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial Disposal certificates Register of fees collected Register of burials Register of purchased graves Register of memorials Register/plan of grace spaces	Indefinite	Archives, Cemeteries Orders, Cremations Regulations
Documentation for legal purposes (unless extended)		
Negligence	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Defamation	1 year	Statute of Limitations
Contract	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Sums recoverable	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Leases	12 years	Statute of Limitations
Personal Injury	3 years	Statute of Limitations
To recover land	12 years	Statute of Limitations
Rent	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Breach of trust	None	Statute of Limitations