WESTCOTT PARISH COUNCIL

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ARCHIVING POLICY

LEGAL BACKGROUND

A local council has custody of the "specified papers" of the parish (1). These papers are defined as the public books, writings and papers of the parish (including photographic copies) and all documents directed by law to be kept therewith (2).

The council has power to provide depositories for parish documents and may require the district or unitary authority to provide a depository (3). In Bucks the depository is the County Record Office.

Local government electors have a right to inspect the minutes of the council and committee meetings, and to make copies (4). Electors may also inspect orders for the payment of money and at audit time, any interested person may inspect the accounts and supporting papers (5). Local council members have a separate statutory right to inspect the council's accounts and to make copies (6).

(1)S.226 LGA 1972
(2)S.270(1) LGA 1972
(3) S.227 LGA 1972
(4) S.228 LGA 1972 (the council is not obliged to provide copies)
(5) S.228 LGA 1972; s.15 ACA 1998
(6) 6S.228(3) LGA 1972

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS

Parish Council documents will be retained for the periods shown in the following table which is based on recommendations from NALC (Legal Note 40). On the expiry of the term documents will be destroyed, where applicable.

Correspondence relating to audit and planning matters will be retained for the same period as other documentation. Other correspondence will be retained for as long as the matter is live.

Documents of title and leases will be retained by the council's solicitors in their strong box.

Minute books and other documents which should be retained indefinitely will, if no longer in current use, be deposited at the County Record Office (7).

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, management

Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books and cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753),
Management Allotments register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Burial authority papers: register of fees collected register of burials and memorials applications for interments	Indefinite	Archives, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 204)
Planning documents	Until permission is given or denied	

(7) The right of the public to inspect certain documents (e.g. minute books) is not affected if the documents have been deposited at a record office.