



## **DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY**

**The Document Retention Policy was reviewed and approved by the Council at its meeting held on 24 October 2024. Document to be reviewed biennially.**

|             | Date         | Minute Reference |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| Adopted     | 26/10/2023   | 23/209           |
| Reviewed    | 24/10/2024   | 24/203           |
| Next Review | October 2026 |                  |

## **1. Objective**

- 1.1 Nazeing Parish Council (NPC) recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to allow for its effective management.
- 1.2 This policy has been created to detail how the records maintained by the parish council are kept and when they should be destroyed.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all records, in all formats, that are created, received, or maintained by the parish council. 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.

## **3. Responsibilities**

- 3.1 NPC have a corporate responsibility to maintain its records in line with regulatory requirements. The person with overall responsibility for this maintenance is the Parish Clerk with assistance from other members of staff and councillors.
- 3.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the parish council's General Privacy Notice and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **4. Retention of Documents**

Documents and records should be retained until they are no longer needed. The table below states the appropriate minimum retention periods for the most important documents for audit and other purposes such as tax liabilities and the possibility of legal disputes. If in doubt, document(s) should be retained until legal advice has been received. The county archivist at the district council will advise on which records should be permanently preserved.

All documents will be retained within the Parish Council Clerks office, unless otherwise stated.

## **5. Disposal of Documents**

At the end of the retention period, documents should be reviewed and then disposed of by one of the following methods:

- Non-confidential records: placed in wastepaper bin for recycling.
- Confidential records or records giving personal information: shred before recycling.
- Deletion of computer records.
- If of historical interest: transmission of records to an external body such as the County Records Office.

## **6. Retention Schedule**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the parish council is required to maintain a retention schedule which lays down the length of time certain record sets need to be retained. NPC have adopted a policy in line with the National Association of Local Council's legal topic note LTN40 (Local Councils' documents and records), see table below.

| Document                                                                                                                                                                                     | Minimum Retention Period                                                                                                                                    | Reason                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Minute books                                                                                                                                                                                 | Indefinite                                                                                                                                                  | Archive / Historical record                                                           |
| Asset register                                                                                                                                                                               | Indefinite                                                                                                                                                  | Management / Audit                                                                    |
| Scales of fees and charges                                                                                                                                                                   | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Management                                                                            |
| Receipts and payment accounts                                                                                                                                                                | Indefinite                                                                                                                                                  | Archive                                                                               |
| Receipt books of all kinds                                                                                                                                                                   | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | VAT                                                                                   |
| Bank statements including deposits / 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                                                                                                                                                                       | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Limitation Act 1980                                                                   |
| Paid invoices                                                                                                                                                                                | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | VAT                                                                                   |
| Paid cheques                                                                                                                                                                                 | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Limitation Act 1980                                                                   |
| VAT record                                                                                                                                                                                   | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | VAT                                                                                   |
| Petty cash books                                                                                                                                                                             | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Limitation Act 1980                                                                   |
| Insurance policies                                                                                                                                                                           | For as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under them. Recommended that a permanent record be kept of insurance company names and policy numbers. | Third party claims, Management                                                        |
| Certificate for insurance against liability for employees                                                                                                                                    | 40 years from the date on which the insurance commenced or was received.                                                                                    | The Employers Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753), Management |
| Annual Inspection Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground Inspections</li> <li>• Tree Surveys</li> </ul>                                                                 | 21 years<br>6 years                                                                                                                                         | Third party claims, Management                                                        |
| Investments and Management of Investment documents                                                                                                                                           | Indefinite Audit                                                                                                                                            | Audit, Management                                                                     |
| Title or trust deeds, Leases and agreements Contracts                                                                                                                                        | Indefinite Audit                                                                                                                                            | Audit, Management, Legal Purposes                                                     |
| Members allowances register                                                                                                                                                                  | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Tax, Limitation Act 1980                                                              |
| Halls and recreational grounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hiring forms</li> <li>• letting diaries</li> <li>• copies of invoices to hirers</li> </ul> records of tickets issued | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | VAT                                                                                   |
| Allotment registers and plans                                                                                                                                                                | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Audit Management                                                                      |
| Planning application information and decisions                                                                                                                                               | 6 years                                                                                                                                                     | Management                                                                            |
| Local Plans and similar documents                                                                                                                                                            | Until they are no longer in force                                                                                                                           | Management                                                                            |
| External magazines, journals and the like                                                                                                                                                    | Up to 1 year                                                                                                                                                | Management                                                                            |
| Local Historical Information                                                                                                                                                                 | Indefinite                                                                                                                                                  | The Local Government (Records) Act 1962                                               |
| Routine correspondence and emails                                                                                                                                                            | For as long as needed for reference or accountability purposes.                                                                                             | Management                                                                            |

|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                |                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                           | Minimum 1 year after issue has been concluded. |                                                                                                  |
| Parish Councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applications for co-option</li> <li>• declarations of acceptance of office</li> <li>• members register of interest</li> </ul> | Term of office + 1 year                        | Management                                                                                       |
| Timesheets                                                                                                                                                                                | Last completed audit year<br>3 years           | Audit<br>Personal Injury Claims                                                                  |
| Employee records                                                                                                                                                                          | Employment period + 6 years                    | Management<br>Providing references<br>Payment of tax, NI and pensions<br>Respond to legal claims |