



NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

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This is a document that sets out North Tawton Town Councils approved and agreed practices. Any deviation must be by resolution of the full Council.

DOCUMENT NAME:	Data Retention Policy
Approved and Ratified date:	01/07/2025
Minutes Reference:	061:25/26
Review date:	July 2027
Version no:	V2

Version	Point(s)	Description of Change	Date

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Data Retention Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Town Council complies with its legal and regulatory obligations and contributes to the overall management of the Council

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1 This retention policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Town Council while carrying out its functions.
- 2.2 Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Town Council and which are retained for a set period to provide evidence of its transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. A small percentage of the Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council Archives and for historical research.
- 2.3 This policy has been drawn up within the context of current legislation concerning-
- Freedom of Information Act
 - Data Protection Act
 - Other legislation or regulations (including Audit and Statute of Limitations) affecting the Town Council

3. Definition of Responsibility

- 3.1 The Town Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment.
- 3.2 The person with overall responsibility for maintaining records and records management systems is the Town Clerk, and Deputy Clerk who will ensure that information can be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner.

4. Retention Schedule

- 4.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the Town Clerk is required to maintain a record retention schedule which identifies how long each type of record needs to be retained and actions to be taken when it is of no further administrative use.
- 4.2 The Retention Schedule is attached.

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Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
FINANCIAL RECORDS		
Receipts and Payment Ledger/spreadsheets	Indefinitely	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Paid Invoices	6 years	Retain for VAT purposes. Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Bank Reconciliation	Quarterly statement kept with minutes	Minute record
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque lists	Last completed audit year	Consistency
Returned/cancelled cheques	Last completed audit year	Consistency
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Budget	6 years (electronic/hard copies filed within minutes)	Reference
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Audited Annual Return	Indefinitely	Archive as per External Auditors
Other Audit documentation including correspondence	6 years	As per External Auditors
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Scales of fees and charges	5 years	Management
INSURANCE RECORDS		
Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	Although no longer a legal requirement this timescale is regarded as good practice.
Insurance Documentation including policies	3 years	To cover any claims under Public Liability Insurance as per insurers. A permanent record of insurance company names and policy numbers to be retained.

Insurance Claims (public/employer's liability)	6 years	Recorded information
PAYROLL RECORDS		
Payslips/expenses	6 years	Tax
Tax and NI Records (including P11 and P35)	4 years	Tax claims
Tax code notifications	6 years	Consistency
Timesheets/Overtime Records	Last completed audit year	Audit
PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION		
Employee letters of appointment	6 years after departure from employment	Consistency
Employee contracts	6 years after departure from employment	Consistency
All other records		
RECRUITMENT		
Selection of an individual/interview record	1 year	Reference
Unsuccessful Applicants' Employment Application forms/references	1 year	Reference
PLANNING DOCUMENTS		
Planning Applications	Destroyed when no longer needed	Duplication of documents held elsewhere
Planning Application lists	Destroyed when no longer needed	Duplication of documents held elsewhere
Handwritten responses from Councillors/ Planning Committee members to planning applications	Destroy 6 months after the Planning Authority decision made, if a meeting was not held to discuss the application	Reference
Planning decision slips	Destroyed when no longer needed	Duplication of documents held elsewhere
Appeal decision slips	Destroyed when no longer needed	Duplication of documents held elsewhere
Structure Plans, Local Plans and similar documents	To be retained if they are in force and then archived	Reference and historical interest

LEGAL DOCUMENTATION

Deeds, conveyances and other legal documentation relating to ownership ie Title Deeds and leases.	Indefinitely	Audit, Management. Limitation Act 1980. Lodged with Solicitors
Trust deeds and schemes	Indefinitely	Audit, Management. Limitation Act 1980. Lodged with Solicitors
Contracts not executed as a Deed	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Any documentation which may be subject to legal action.	Retain until the threat of litigation has been removed.	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
(Where item falls into more than one category retain for longest period stated)	Minimum periods for retention: Negligence – 6 yrs; Defamation – 1 yr; Sums recoverable by statute – 6 yrs; Personal injury – 3 yrs; to recover land – 12 yrs; rent – 6 years.	

ADMINISTRATION RECORDS

Draft documents	Destroy once the final version of the document has	Management
Handwritten notes taken by clerk with a view to producing minutes	Destroy once the minutes have been approved as correct and a true record	For clarification at following meeting
Approved Minutes	Indefinitely	Archive
Reports	6 years after closure of file	Consistency
Back up tapes/records	Rotate to eliminate storing of materials which should have been destroyed	Management
Asset Register	Current and last completed audit version 6 years (see correspondence kept for legal purposes above)	Audit and Management
Correspondence/General Admin files (see Historical Records below)	been approved, unless required as a record of the development of a policy initiative	Management

Emails	To be dealt with in the same way as manual records. Destroy routine/trivial emails and those where hard copies have been taken	Management
Historical Records (manual and electronically held)	Archive after 30 years. (Files to be closed after 5 year)	Public Records Act 1958. Archive
Personal Data	Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it is held	Data Protection Act
Register of Members' Interests	Whilst a member	Publication Scheme
Risk Assessment	Information retained	Reference
Complaints	3 years	Reference
FOI Disclosure log	Destroy each record 5 years after record is opened	Management
Details of Request made under FOI Act	Destroy as above	Management
Disposal Schedules	Indefinitely	Management
Information from other bodies i.e. County Associations, NALC and other numerous bodies	Retain for as long as useful and relevant	Management
Books, magazines, offprints and journals	Any unique or rare published works in print as defined by the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, are to be delivered to the British Library. Items published by other bodies to be retained as long as useful and relevant	Management