

**WHISTON PARISH COUNCIL**

DATA RETENTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Parish Council recognises it must at times, keep and process sensitive and personal information concerning both employees and the public. It has adopted this policy to not only meet the legal obligations, but to ensure high standards of practice. The Parish Council is open about its operations and works closely with the community. In the case of information that is not personal or confidential, the Parish Council is prepared to make information available to the public. Details of information which is available is contained in the Council’s Publication Scheme which is based on the statutory model publication scheme for local councils.

DEFINITIONS

* 1. *For the purposes of this policy, “record” shall be interpreted to mean any papers, files, books, photographs, tapes, films, recordings or other documentary materials or any copies thereof, regardless of physical form, made, produced, executed or received by any employee in connection with the transaction of Misterton Parish Council’s business.*

*1.2 The term “electronic record” means any record which is created, received, maintained or*

*stored on local workstations or central servers. Examples include, but are not limited to: email, word processing documents, spreadsheets and databases – including but not limited to file records, investigation reports, financial* accounting records and payroll records.

1.3 “Official Records” are records maintained but not limited to Accounts (all financial records, VAT records, payroll records, bank accounts etc), electronic records, HR records (personnel records, insurance records etc) and Council Operation records (minutes, correspondence etc).

DATA RETENTION

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that necessary records and documents are adequately protected and maintained and to ensure that records which are no longer needed or of no value are discarded at the appropriate time.

2.2 Record and Documents no longer required under the retention policy, may be required to be archived, and before destruction this should be checked.

2.3 This policy relates to electronic records as well as physical “hard copies”.

2.4 Individuals responsible for the retention of records are also responsible for their destruction following the retention period.

2.5 Sensitive or confidential documents must be disposed of by shredding or other means to

ensure that the material can no longer be read or interpreted.

2.6 Appendix 1 sets out the Parish Council’s data retention requirements and the justification for the periods specified.

2.7 Record retention periods may be increased by government regulation, judicial or administrative constraint order, private or government contract, pending litigation or audit requirements. Such modifications supersede the requirements in Appendix 1.

2.9 In the event of a government audit, investigation or pending litigation, record disposition may be suspended at the direction of the Parish Clerk and subsequently ratified by the full council.

2.10 When litigation, complaints or investigations against the Parish Council or its employees are filed or threatened, the law imposes a duty upon the Council to preserve all documents and records pertaining to the issues. All records including electronic records will be preserved during any such period and will supersede the retention schedule in Appendix 1

2.11 No document list can be exhaustive. Questions regarding the retention period for any specific document or class of documents not included in the below table should be addressed to the Parish Clerk who will consult with the Chair.