

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY



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DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Faversham Town Council is obliged to maintain and retain documentation for a number of purposes, including audit, tax liabilities and in the event of legal disputes and proceedings. Subject to those reasons, papers and records may be destroyed if they are no longer of use or relevance.

Both the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) require public bodies to manage information and its access in particular ways.

2. Strategic Approach to Record Management

Faversham Town Council's policy on record management will enable the Council to:

- Comply with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
- Create authentic, reliable and useable records
- Support the Council's business functions, including asset management
- Document the Council's decisions and activities
- Reduce storage costs
- Facilitate the paperless office
- Enable the efficient and accurate retrieval of information
- Dispose correctly of records no longer required

The Town Clerk will be responsible for record management.

3. Staff Responsibility

All staff are obliged to:

- Keep accurate records in an organised and accessible form
- Keep records for as long as necessary
- Document actions and decisions in records
- Document reasons for the disposal of records
- Ensure all records created by the Town Council are relevant, complete and accurate, without any unsubstantiated or subjective commentary, and protected against unauthorised addition, deletion, alteration, use or concealment

4. Periods of Retention

The minimum periods for which various types of records must be kept are set out in the Retention Schedule at Annex A. These reflect statutory requirements, codes of practice and recommendations published by professional and other bodies. In the

absence of any guidance, it will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk to determine a suitable retention period.

At the end of the retention period, the record must be assessed to determine whether it should be retained for a further period. This is particularly relevant where the record has been the subject of a request for access to information under the GDPR or the FOIA. This is the case even where access to information has been refused, as the record should be retained until the end of the period in which an appeal can be lodged or the appeals procedure exhausted.

5. Record disposal

Records designated for disposal must be securely disposed of to preserve confidentiality. No record is to be disposed of without the approval of the Town Clerk, reasons must be given for disposal, and a note made of which records are destroyed with their date of destruction.

RETENTION SCHEDULE (Annex A)

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
Employee information	6 years from term of employment	Taxes Management Act 1970
Prospective Employee information (job applications)	12 months from the date of application	Employment Tribunal
Income Tax	6 years from term of employment	The Income Tax (Employments) Regulations 1993
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Recordings and notes of meetings	1 month or immediately following approval of the Minutes	Management
Emails	6 months	Management
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Section 221 of the Companies Act 1985 as modified by the Companies Acts 1989 and 2006
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	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 Notice 700/21
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance	40 years from the date on	The Employers' Liability

against liabilities for employees	which insurance commenced or was reviewed	(Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit , Management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Halls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application to hire • Lettings diaries • Copies of bills to hire • Records of agreements 	6 years	VAT
Allotments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register and plans 	Indefinite	Audit , Management
Moorings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mooring agreements 	6 years	Management

The UK Limitation Act 1980 contains a 6-year time limit for starting many legal proceedings. So where documents may be relevant to a contractual claim, it's recommended that these are kept for at least a corresponding 6-year period.