



Documents Retention Policy

Policy Document	BTC/004
Dated:	April 2019
Review Date:	May 2020
Status:	Adopted
Minute Number:	CM-9133 01.06.2020
Next review:	April 2021

Document Retention Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The guidelines set out in this document support the Bewdley Town Council Data Protection Policy and assists in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) and other associated legislation.
- 1.2. It is important that Bewdley Town Council has in place arrangements for the retention and disposal of documents necessary for the adequate management of services in undertaking its responsibilities. This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the retention of documents and sets out the requirements for the disposal of documents. However, it is important to note that this is a live document and will be updated on a regular basis.
- 1.3. Bewdley Town Council will ensure that information is not kept for longer than is necessary and will retain the minimum amount of information that it requires to carry out its functions and the provision of services, whilst adhering to any legal or statutory requirements.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1. It is recognised that up to date, reliable and accurate information is vital to support the work that BewdleyTown Council does and the services that it provides to its residents. This document will help us to:
 - a) Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the Council to operate and provide services to the public.
 - b) Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and General Data Protection Regulation.
 - c) Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily.
 - d) Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations.

3. Scope

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'documents' includes electronic and paper records.

- 3.2. Where storage is by means of paper records, originals rather than photocopies should be retained where possible.

4. Standards of Good Practice

- 4.1. Bewdley Town Council will make every effort to ensure that it meets the following standards of good practice:
- a) Adhere to legal requirements for the retention of information as specified in the Retention Schedule at Annex A.
 - b) Personal information will be retained in locked filing cabinets within the Town Council Office, access to these documents will only be by authorised personnel.
 - c) Disclosure information will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Town Council Office.
 - d) Appropriately dispose of information that is no longer required.
 - e) Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that confidential and sensitive information is securely destroyed.
 - f) Information about unidentifiable individuals is permitted to be held indefinitely for historical, statistical or research purposes e.g. Equalities data.
 - g) Wherever possible only one copy of any personal information will be retained and that will be held within the locked filing in the Town Council Office.

5. Breach of Policy and Standards

- 5.1. Any employee who knowingly or recklessly contravenes any instruction contained in, or following from, this Policy may, depending on the circumstances of the case, have disciplinary action, taken against them, which could include dismissal.
- 5.2. Where there is a breach of the policy, the Council may need to consider whether there is also a breach of GDPR.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1. The Town Clerk has responsibility for implementation of the policy under delegation of Bewdley Town Council.
- 6.2. The Town Clerk is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy including ad hoc checks to ensure compliance.

7. Retention

- 7.1. Timeframes for retention of documents have been set using legislative requirements and guidance from the National Association of Local Councils.
- 7.2. Throughout retention the conditions regarding safe storage and controlled access will remain in place.

- 7.3. The attached 'Appendix' shows the minimum requirements for the retention of documents as determined by Bewdley Town Council for the management of specific documentation types. Officers holding documents should exercise judgement as to whether they can be disposed of at the end of those periods detailed in the attached 'Appendix A'.

8. Disposal

- 8.1. Documents/data no longer required by Bewdley Town Council for administrative purposes must be finely shredded/disposed of using specialist waste removal contractors and deleted entirely and securely from the Bewdley Town Council computer systems.
- 8.2 All documents will be reviewed prior to disposal.

APPENDIX A

Document Retention Timescales

DOCUMENT	RETENTION PERIOD
Finance	
Financial published final accounts	Indefinitely
Annual Governance and Accountability Return	6 years
Final Account working papers	6 years
Records of all accounting transactions held in the financial management system	6 years plus the current year
Cash Books (records of monies paid out and received)	12 years
Purchase Orders	6 years
Cheque payment listings (invoices received)	6 years
Payment Vouchers Capital and Revenue (copy Invoices)	12 years
Petty cash vouchers and reimbursement claims	6 years
Debtors and rechargeable work records	6 years
Expenses and travel allowance claims	invoices 6 years
Register for statutory accounting purposes	10 years
Adopted annual budget	6 years
Financial Plan	6 years
Budget Estimates – Detailed Working Papers and summaries	3 years
Bank Statements (electronic) and Instructions to banks	6 years
Bank Statements (Hardcopy)	6 years
Prime evidence that money has been banked	6 years
Refer to Drawer (RD) cheques	3 years
Cancelled Expenditure cheques	3 years
Bank Reconciliation	3 years
Grant/Funding Application and Claims	3 years
Precept Forms Indefinitely Internal Audit Plans/Reports	3 years
Fees and Charges Schedules	6 years
Loans and Investment Records, temporary loan receipts	10 years (after redemption of loan)
Current and expired insurance contracts and policies	Indefinitely
Insurance records and claims	10 years (or as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under them)
VAT records, input and output	10 years
Final accounts of contracts executed under hand or seal	12 years from completion of contract
Redundancy records Personnel/Employment	6 years from the date of redundancy
Personnel/Employment	

Unsuccessful application forms	6 months to 1 year
Unsuccessful reference requests	1 year
Successful application forms and CVs	For duration of employment + 6 years
References received	For duration of employment + 6 years
Statutory sick records, pay, calculations, certificates, etc	For duration of employment + 6 years
Annual leave records	For duration of employment + 6 years
Unpaid leave/special leave	For duration of employment + 6 years
Annual appraisal/assessment records	Current year and previous 2 years
Pension Records	Until the individual is at least 67 years old
Time control checks	2 years
Disclosure & Barring Checks	6 months
Employee Personnel files, training records, discipline and grievance records and working time records	6 years after employment ceases
Disciplinary or grievance investigations – unproven	Destroy immediately after investigation or appeal
Statutory Maternity/Paternity records, calculations, certificates etc	3 years after the tax year in which the maternity period ended
Time sheets and overtime claims	6 years
Income Tax and National Insurance Records	Not less than 3 years after the end of the financial year to which they relate
Wage/salary records, overtime, bonuses, expenses etc	6 years
Accident books, records and reports	3 years from the date of last entry (If a child or young adult is involved, then until the person reaches the age of 21)
Redundancy records	6 years from the date of redundancy
Corporate	
All Bewdley Town Council minutes including minutes of committees, sub-committee meetings and any working group minutes	Indefinitely and archived after two years
Policies and procedures	Until updated or reviewed
Asset management records	Indefinitely
Insurance policy documents	Whist valid
Internal audit records	6 years
Internal audit fraud investigation	7 years from date of final outcome of investigation
Risk Register	Indefinitely
Risk assessments (any)	6 years
Drivers logbooks and mileage	6 years year
Pre-tender qualification document, summary list of expression of interest received, a summary of any financial or technical evaluation supplied with the expressions of interest.	1 year
Successful tender document	Life of contract + 6 years
Unsuccessful tender documentation	Until final payment of contact let is made
Deeds of land and property	Indefinitely
Land and property rental agreements	6 years after expiry of the agreement
Property evaluation lists	Indefinitely

Lease agreements, variation and valuation queries	12 years after the expiry of the agreement
Documentation referring to externally funded projects	6 years
Neighbourhood Plans	Indefinitely
Play Area Inspection Reports	21 years
Health & Safety Health and Safety	
Accident books and records	3 years after the date of the last entry (unless an accident involving chemicals or asbestos is contained within, then 40 years). If the accident concerns a child or a young adult retain until the person reaches the age of 21.
Medical records containing details of employee exposed to asbestos or as specified by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 1999	40 years from the date of the last entry
Medical examination certificates	4 years from date of issue
All inspection certificates	6 years
Repair job sheets	2 years
Periodic machinery inspection tests (PAT, equipment calibration, M.O.Ts etc)	2 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of general waste	2 years
Plant and equipment testing 2 years Unusual Incident Forms	3 years
Manual Handling Assessment Forms	3 years
Legal litigation documents	6 years after settlement
Other	
Hard copy routine correspondence	File management – retain until matter dealt with; maximum period of 6 months. Where Bewdley Town Council believes it needs to be retained for longer any personal information will be redacted.
Electronic routine correspondence	File management – retain until matter dealt with; maximum period 12 months. Where Bewdley Town Council believes it needs to be retained for longer any personal information will be redacted.
Requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000	File management – retain until matter dealt with; maximum period of 6 months. Where Bewdley Town Council believes it needs to be retained for longer any personal information will be redacted.
Planning Applications	Recommendations in connection with relevant applications are recorded in the minutes which are retained indefinitely.

	<p>Correspondence (both hard copy and electronic) received in connection with planning applications will be retained in accordance with the routine documents/correspondence policy noted above. Where an application is refused by the local planning authority, the application will be retained until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired.</p>
--	---