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Ingoldmells Parish Council

RETENTION POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Ingoldmells Parish Council recognises the need to retain documentation for audit purposes, staff management, tax liabilities and the eventuality of legal disputes and legal proceedings. Subject to these, or other relevant considerations, documents that are no longer used or relevant should be destroyed.

1.2 Documents may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

1.3 The Clerk has the responsibility for the retention, storage and destruction of documents in compliance with this policy.

2. Retention Timescales

2.1 Appendix A details the minimum time limits on the retention of Council documents required for the purposes of audit and other reasons. Documents outside this schedule are as follows:

1. Planning documents: All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available from Lincolnshire County Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council minutes and are retained indefinitely.

2. Insurance policies: All insurance policies should be kept for as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under them. The Council will keep a permanent record of insurance company names and policy numbers for all insured risks. Article 4 of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 requires local Councils, as employers, to retain certificates of insurance against liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment for a period of 40 days from when the insurance commenced or was renewed.

3. Documents relating to staff: Data relating to staff is kept securely and in accordance with the 8 data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 1998 and are not kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held. However, records about former staff may be retained and accessed for the purpose of giving references, payment of tax, national insurance contributions and pensions, and in respect of any legal claims made against the Council.

4. Correspondence: Correspondence relating to audit matters will be kept for the appropriate period (refer to Appendix A). In planning matters, correspondence sent to and from the parish Council is retained until the development is complete. (see above note relating to Planning in #1 above))

Historical/local interest documents: The Parish Council might acquire records of local interest, gifts or records of general and local interest. These documents will either be retained by the Clerk.

3. Arrangements for the deposit, storage and management of documents

3.1 In accordance with s.227 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Parish Council may request Lincolnshire County Council to provide proper depositories for all specified papers (defined as public books, writings, Council papers and all documents) directed by law to be kept where there is no provision.

3.2 All electronic documents are kept securely in compliance with the relevant legislation. Electronic

devices are password protected. A copy of all computer passwords is lodged in a sealed envelope in the safe. If required, the envelope will be opened in the presence of 2 Councillors, at which point the passwords will be changed as soon as access to the computer files is gained. Back-ups of documents are made to a memory stick.

4. Retention of documents for legal purposes

4.1 Most legal documents are governed by the Limitations Act 1980, which prevents legal claims arising after a certain period. However, limitation periods can be extended so, when making a decision at the end of a storage period the Council will weigh the risk of lengthy storage against the risk of a claim being made. Insurance policy wording will be checked to ensure retention requirements under a policy are complied with. Limitations generally are as follows:

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years
Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
Personal Injury	3 years
To Recover Land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	Never to be destroyed

Appendix A: Retention of Documents

TYPE OF RECORD/DOCUMENT	RETENTION PERIOD
Minute books	Indefinite
Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements	Indefinite
Investments	Indefinite
Records of members' allowances	6 years
Contracts, Quotations, Tenders	6 years
Receipt/payment accounts	6 years
Bank statements, paying-in books, cheque book stubs, Paid invoices, Paid cheques, VAT records	6 years
Insurance policies	While valid
Scale of fees & charges	6 years
Planning applications and associated correspondence	Refer to Lincolnshire County Council
Correspondence and other documents on files	3 years or until the matter is closed, whichever is the later*
E-mails	1 week. Paper copy to be placed on file if appropriate*
Computer-based records (other than e-mails)	As appropriate based on the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998*
Annual Accounts	Indefinite
Annual Return	Indefinite

Bank statements	6 years
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit
Paying in books	Last completed audit
Quotations / Tenders	6 years
Paid invoices	6 years
VAT records	6 years
Salary records	6 years
Tax & NI records	6 years
Insurance policies	Whilst valid
Cert of Employers	Liability 40 years
Cert of public liability	40 years
Assets register	Indefinite (revised annually)
Scale of fees & charges	6 years