



Document Retention Policy

Purpose:

Stroud Town Council (STC) requires a wide variety of documents for transacting its business and is committed to retaining these documents in a format and for periods of time that:

- Enables STC to meet its statutory obligations in respect of documents subject to legislation;
- Ensures security of documents;
- Protects privacy;
- Facilitates access to information;
- Optimises the use of storage space;
- Is cost effective; and
- Facilitates destruction of redundant documents.

Scope:

This Policy applies to users of STC's information records, both paper and electronic, it includes Councillors and employees.

Statutory Requirements:

Documents subject to a statutory period of retention are identified by their associated legislation in Appendix A.

Security of Documents:

STC's records are held in paper and/or electronic format. To minimise the risk of accidental loss of valuable records, masters or copies (as deemed appropriate) of paper-documents will be stored off-site.

Employees' Privacy:

The privacy of personnel records will be appropriately assured.

Availability & Access:

All records necessary for STC's business will be retained for a period of time that reasonably assures the availability of records when needed. Staff will be asked to anonymise documents where appropriate to enable them to be kept for longer use.

Storage Space and Cost:

Redundant records may be destroyed in order to reduce the cost of storage, indexing and handling the vast quantity of documents that would otherwise accumulate. Destruction of documents will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of this Policy to avoid any inference that a document was destroyed in anticipation of a problem.

Electronic Storage:

Records maintained on electronic data processing storage media will be subject to the same rules of retention and security as paper records.

Implementation of Policy:

The Clerk will be responsible for the implementation of the Policy.

Monitoring & Review of Policy:

The Finance and Policy Committee will review the Policy periodically to monitor its effectiveness.

Appendix A

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Administrative		
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Agendas	End of administrative use	
Reports/documents circulated with agendas	Keep as per related agendas	Review
Councillors declarations of office	2 years from end of office	Review
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Councillors register of interests	18 months from end of appointment	
Routine correspondence and papers	End of administrative use	To comply with GDPR
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	End of administrative use	To comply with GDPR
Planning applications for minor works	End of administrative use	To comply with GDPR
Planning applications and related papers for controversial developments	End of administrative use	To comply with GDPR
Planning Appeal decisions	6 years from conclusion of Appeal	
Elections		
Nomination forms for candidates for election to the Town council	6 months from close of poll	
Registers of electors	End of administrative use	
Legal and Property		
Byelaws and orders	Permanent	Audit, Management
Title deeds more than 100 years old	Permanent	Audit, Management
Title deeds less than 100 years old	Permanent	Audit, Management
Contracts, wayleaves, agreements or other legal documents other than title deeds	Permanent	Audit, Management
Insurance policies	40 years from the end of the policy	
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management
Property registers, terriers	Permanent	

Maps, plans and surveys of property owned by the Council	Permanent	
Maps created under the provisions of the Rights of Way Act 1932	Permanent	Archive
Tenders and quotations (successful) – for contracts under hand	6 years after the term of the contract has expired	To comply with Statute of Limitations
Tenders and quotations (successful) – for contracts under seal	12 years after the term of the contract has expired	To comply with the Statute of Limitations
Tenders and quotations (unsuccessful)	1 years after start of contract	
Financial		
Receipt and payment books	6 years from end of current financial year	VAT
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
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
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Scales of fees and charges	6 years from end of financial year	Management
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Precept books and contribution orders	6 years from end of current financial year	Management
Financial returns to district auditors	6 years from end of current financial year	Management
Rent books	6 years from end of current financial year	Management
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years from end of financial year	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Timesheets	Last completed audit year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)
VAT records	6 years generally 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT
Vouchers	6 years from end of financial year	Management
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Personnel		

See Appendix1 in in STC <i>Records Retention Policy</i> <i>(Employees)</i>		
For Allotments		
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
For Burial Grounds		
Register of fees collected	Indefinite	Archives, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI. 204)
Register of burials		
Register of purchased graves		
Register/plan of grave spaces		
Register of memorials		
Applications for interment		
Applications for right to erect memorials		
Disposal certificates		
Copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial		
For Halls, Centres, Recreation Grounds		
Application to hire	6 years	VAT
Lettings diaries		
Copies of bills to hires		
Record of tickets issued		
Miscellaneous		
Community magazines or newsletters (one copy)	Permanent	Archive
Press-cuttings books	Permanent	Archive
Photographs (identified and dated to ensure useful in future)	Permanent	Archive
Records of other / predecessor bodies		
Records of other bodies such as burial board, Home Guard unit, local society or ad hoc committee	Permanent	Archive
Any records dating from before 1984 now held by the town such as poor law or surveyor's records, an inclosure award etc	Permanent	Archive
Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other organisations	End of administrative use	