



# Data Retention and Disposal Policy

<b>Approval date: 20/04/2026</b>	<b>Approved by: Clerk</b>
<b>Applies to:</b> Board Members, officers and employees of the Board, and any contractors, consultants or agents who process personal data on behalf of the Board.	<b>Linked Documents:</b> Data Protection Policy   Information, Systems and Security Policy   CCTV use and Privacy Statement.
<b>Frequency of review: 2 years</b>	<b>Next review date: April 2028</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy supports the Board’s compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. It outlines how the Board retains, reviews, and securely disposes of records, whether held in physical or electronic form.
- 1.2 The Board will retain only the minimum information necessary to carry out its statutory duties and service delivery. All information will be stored, reviewed, and disposed of in line with applicable legal, regulatory, and operational 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 the organisation does and the services that it provides to the area. This document will help us to:
  - Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the organisation to operate and provide services to the area.
  - Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
  - Save employees’ time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily. This will assist them as they carry out their daily duties, or if searching for information requested under the Freedom of Information Act.
  - 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.



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- 3.3 This policy specifies how important documents (hardcopy, emails, and attachments, online or other media) should be retained, protected, and when or if they become eligible for destruction.

<b>Record</b>	Describes the files and documents used by the Board
<b>Legislation/Guidance</b>	Information about law that is appropriate for such records. There is not always a law setting out a retention period, in such instances it is guidance, departmental policy or usage which dictates the retention period.
<b>Retention Period</b>	Retention Period describes minimum retention periods. Where there is no clear indication as to when this time should be counted from, it should be assumed that the Retention Period is from the time the file/record is closed. All Retention Periods quoted as legislative requirements are minimum periods for retention only.
<b>Retention Policy</b>	Retention Policy describes what should be done at the end of the retention period; destroy or review it to see if it should be held for longer.
<b>Location</b>	Location describes where the records should spend their Retention Period and where they may be moved to after review.

*Retention periods begin from the closure of a record, the end of the relevant activity or event (e.g. employee departure, contract expiry), or the end of the financial year, unless otherwise stated.*

### 4. Document Retention

- 4.1 Documents will be retained for varying lengths of time, depending on the prevailing legislation and or guidelines as detailed in the schedule within this policy document. At least one copy of each document will be retained according to the schedule.
- 4.2 Records stored in electronic systems (e.g. financial software, email, GIS mapping, HR platforms) are subject to the same retention periods and disposal procedures as physical records. Electronic records must be securely deleted in accordance with data protection requirements

### 5. Document Protection

- 5.1 Documents (hardcopy, online, or other media) will be stored in a protected environment for the duration of the Document Retention Schedule. Computer backup media will be included.



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

### 6. Personal Information

- 6.1 All records that contain personal information should be stored, transported, and disposed of in a secure way, in accordance with the Information Security and Systems Acceptable Use Policy, in line with the Data Protection Act.

### 7. Litigation

- 7.1 Where records are subject to litigation, they must not be destroyed until any known threat of litigation has been resolved.

### 8. Document Disposal

- 8.1 Files and electronic information should be destroyed in a manner that prevents their reconstitution. Back-up copies stored on alternative media (server/microfilm/paper) should also be destroyed to ensure compliance with the requirements of Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. The two most acceptable methods of disposal are via reputable disposal companies or by shredding.

### 9. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

- 9.1 There are some records that do not need to be kept at all; Standard Operating Procedure defines types of records that staff may routinely destroy in the normal course of business. However, the retention and disposal schedule must still contain references and instructions referring to them. SOP usually applies to information that is duplicated, unimportant, or only of short-term value.
- 9.2 Unimportant records or information include:
- 'With compliments' slips.
  - Catalogues and trade journals.
  - Telephone message slips.
  - Non-acceptance of invitations.
  - Trivial electronic mail messages or notes that are not related to The Board's business.
  - Requests for stock information such as maps, plans.
  - Out-of-date distribution lists.
  - Working papers which lead to a final report.
- 9.3 Duplicated and superseded material such as stationery, manuals, drafts, forms, address books, and reference copies of annual reports may be destroyed under SOP. Electronic copies of documents where a hard copy has been printed and filed, and thermal paper facsimiles after making and filling a photocopy are also covered.



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

### 10. Roles and Responsibilities

- 10.1 The Clerk is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy, including ad-hoc checks to ensure compliance.
- 10.2 Other delegated staff are responsible for ensuring their records are kept and destroyed in line with this policy.



## APPENDIX A

### Recommended Document Retention Timescales

The retention period should be the number of years specified plus the current financial period (i.e., three years plus the current period, therefore, at least three years of documentation will always be retained at any given point in time).

This list is not exhaustive; if you are unsure about any document, contact the Clerk for clarification.

### Document Retention Period

#### Finance

Document	Retention Period
Annual Management Accounts Report	Permanent (corporate record)
Signed Audited Accounts	Permanent (corporate record)
End of Year Account working papers	6 years
Records of all accounting transactions held by the Financial Management System	6 years
Cash Books (records of monies paid out and received)	6 years
Purchase Orders	6 years
Cheque Payment Listings (Invoices received)	6 years
Payment Vouchers Capital and Revenue (copy invoices)	6 years
BACS listings	6 years
Goods received notes, advice notes and delivery notes	3 years
Copy receipts	6 years
Petty cash vouchers and reimbursement claims	6 years
Debtors and rechargeable works records	6 years
Expenses and travel allowance claims	6 years
Asset Register for statutory accounting purposes	10 years
Journal Sheets	5 years
Ledger / Trial Balance	10 years
Year-end ledger tabulations – ledger details and cost updates	5 years
Published Budget Books	Permanent (corporate record)
Financial Plan	Permanent (corporate record)
Budget Estimates – Detailed Working Papers and summaries	Permanent (corporate record)
Bank Statement (Disk Space) and Instructions to banks	6 years
Bank Statements (Hardcopy)	6 years



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Banking Records including Giro cheques, bills of exchange and other negotiable instruments	6 years
Prime evidence that money has been banked	6 years
Refer to Drawer (RD) cheques	2 years
Cancelled Expenditure cheques	2 years
Bank Reconciliation	3 years
Cheques presented/drawn on the bank accounts	3 years
Prime records that money has been correctly recorded in the organisations financial systems	3 years
Grant/Funding Applications and Claims	5 years
Precept Forms	Permanent (corporate record)
Internal Audit Plans/Reports	3 years
Fees and Charges Schedules	5 years
Time sheets and overtime claims	6 years
Payroll and tax information relating to employees	6 years
Payroll costing analysis	2 years
Records of payment made to employees for salaries/wages (including intermediate payslips)	6 years
Statutory end of year returns to Inland Revenue and Pensions Section	Permanent (corporate record)
Loans and Investment Records; temporary loan receipts and loan tabulations	6 years (after redemption of loan)
VAT, Income Tax and National Insurance Records	6 years
Current and expired insurance contracts and policies indefinitely Insurance records and claims	6 years
Capital and contracts register	Indefinitely
Final accounts of contracts executed under hand	6 years from completion of contract
Final accounts of contracts executed under seal	12 years from completion of contract
All Other reconciliations	3 years

### Personnel

Unsuccessful application forms	6 months
Unsuccessful reference requests	1 year
Successful applications forms and CVs	For duration of employment + 5 years
References received	For duration of employment + 5 years
Statutory sick records, pay, calculations, certificates etc.	For duration of employment + 5 years
Annual leave records	For duration of employment + 5 years
Unpaid leave/special leave	For duration of employment + 5 years
Annual appraisal/assessment records	Current year and previous 2 years



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Time Control Records	6 years
Criminal Records Bureau Checks	6 months
Personnel files and training records	5 years after employment ceases
Disciplinary or grievance investigations - proved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal.</li> <li>• Written.</li> <li>• Final warning.</li> <li>• Anything involving children.</li> </ul>	6 months 1 year 18 months permanently
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
Wages/salary records, overtime, bonuses, expenses etc	6 years

### Corporate

Minutes and reports of Committee meetings	Permanent (corporate record)
Minutes and reports for Special Committee meetings	Permanent (corporate record)
Minutes and reports of sub-committees	Permanent (corporate record)
Notes and reports of working groups	Permanent (corporate record)
Policies and procedures	Until updated or reviewed
Asset Management records	Permanent (corporate record)
Asset management reports	Permanent (corporate record)
Internal audit records	6 years
Internal audit fraud investigation	7 years from date of final outcome of investigation
Risk register	Current version: retained while active. Superseded versions: Minimum 6 years.
Risk management reports	6 years
Equalities data	6 years
Vehicle maintenance and registration records (all necessary certificates, MOT certificates, test records and vehicle registration documents etc)	2 years after vehicle disposed of
Fuel usage records	3 years
Deeds of land and property	Permanent (corporate record)
Land and property rental agreements	6 years after expiry of the agreement
Property evaluation lists	Permanent (corporate record)
Lease agreements, variation and valuation queries	Permanent (corporate record)
Documentation referring to externally funded projects	6 years
Booking diaries	3 years



## Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Electronic booking information is held in the system indefinitely due to the need to gather statistical information	
Premises License applications	Permanent (corporate record)

### Health & Safety

Health and Safety Accident books	3 years after the date of the last entry (unless an accident involving chemicals or asbestos is contained within)
Medical records containing details of employee exposed to asbestos or as specified by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999	40 years from the date of the last entry
Medical examination certificates	4 years from date of issue
Records relating to accidents person over 18 years	3 years from date of accident
Records relating to accidents person under 18 years	Until 21st birthday
Asbestos records for premises/property including survey and removal records	40 years
All inspection certificates (Gas Safe, FENSA etc)	2 years
Repairs job sheets	2 years
Periodic machinery inspection tests (PAT, equipment calibration etc)	2 years
Warranties	10 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of general waste	3 years
Documents relating to the process of collecting, transporting and disposal of hazardous waste	10 years
Plant and equipment testing	2 years
Risk Assessment Forms	2 years
Unusual Incident Forms	3 years
Manual Handling Assessment Forms	3 years

### Additional Items

Approved Minutes	Permanent (corporate record)
Draft/Rough notes taken at meeting	Until minutes are approved
CCTV	14-day image retention



# Data Retention and Disposal Policy

## Version Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
1.0	20/04/2026	Initial policy approved