**Retention of Documents Policy**

Stainforth Town Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of Stainforth Town Council.

This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

**Scope  
Responsibilities  
Retention Schedule  
Scope of the policy**

**Scope**This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Stainforth Town Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by Stainforth Town Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy of electronically. A small percentage of the Councils records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council’s archives and for historical research.

**Responsibilities**The Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Council, and she is required to manage the Council’s records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timer manner.

**Retention Schedule**Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates in the course of its business. The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.   
The Clerk is expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

**Document Minimum Retention**Minute Books - Indefinite Archive  
Annual Accounts - Indefinite Archive  
Annual Return - Indefinite Archive  
Bank Statements - 7 years Audit/Management   
Cheque Book Stubs – Last Completed Audit Management   
Paying In Books – Last Completed Audit Management   
Quotations – 7 years Audit  
Paid Invoices – 7 years Audit/VAT   
VAT Records – 7 years Audit/VAT  
Salary Records – 7 years Audit   
Tax & NI Records – 7 years Audit  
Insurance Policies Whilst Valid – Audit  
Cert of Employers Liability – 40 years Audit/Legal   
Cert of Public Liability – 40 years Audit/Legal  
Assets Register – Indefinite Audit  
Deeds, Leases – Indefinite Audit

**Planning Applications**All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at DMBC. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Stainforth Town Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the council minutes and are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained in accordance with the Routine Documents/Correspondence policy below:

**Routing Documents/Correspondence**Declarations of Acceptance: Term of Office + 1 year (Filing management)  
Complaints: 1 year (Filing management)  
General Information: 3 months (Filing management)  
Routine Correspondence and Emails: 6 months (Filing management)

Disposal procedures: all documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and deleted entirely from the Council’s computer system(s).