BRADWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Records Retention & Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by Bradwell Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions.

Records include any document—paper or electronic—that facilitates Council business and is retained to provide evidence of transactions, decisions or activities.

1.2 A small proportion of Council records will be selected for **permanent preservation** as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 The Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain records in accordance with legislation including GDPR, FOIA 2000, Local Government Act 1972, and the Council's own governance framework. The **Clerk** has overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring compliance.

2.2 The Clerk must ensure records are accurate, accessible, secure, and disposed of in accordance with the Council's retention schedule.

2.3 Councillors must ensure that any records relevant to Council business—whether paper or electronic—are passed to the Clerk for inclusion in the official record. Councillors should regularly undertake "weeding" and "housekeeping" of personal files. Upon leaving office, councillors must delete all electronic Council records and destroy any hard-copy documents.

2.4 Paper documents that are no longer required must be **securely shredded**.

2.5 Electronic data must be deleted securely and in accordance with GDPR. Routine correspondence and emails shall be retained for **six months**.

3. Retention Schedule

3.1 Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council must maintain a retention schedule listing all record series created in the course of its business, the minimum retention period, and the action to be taken when records are no longer required. This process is managed by the Clerk.

Retention Schedule (Updated 2026)

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees and charges	5 years	Management

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Receipts & Payments / Income & Expenditure Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books (all types)	6 years	VAT
Bank statements (including savings)	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	12 years / Indefinite	Statute of Limitations
VAT invoices and records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage & telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Members' allowance register	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Halls, centres & recreation grounds records	6 years	VAT
Applications to hire, letting diaries, bills to hirers, ticket records	6 years	VAT
Declarations of acceptance of office	Term of office + 4 years	Management
Members' register of interests	Term of office + 4 years	Management
Complaints	2 years	Management
General information	3 months	Management

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Routine correspondence & emails	6 months	Management
Planning applications	None (held by PDNPA)	Recommendations stored in Minutes

4. Secure Disposal

- Paper documents must be **cross-shredded** or disposed of via a secure destruction service.
- Electronic files must be deleted securely, including removal from backups where applicable.
- Confidential or sensitive records must be destroyed in a manner that prevents reconstruction.