OCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Retention of Documents Policy
July 2026

The Parish 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 the Parish Council.

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

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish 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 or electronically. They are kept at the home of the Clerk / in other approved premises where measures are taken to secure them from fire, theft, damp etc. A small percentage of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research; some of these records were deposited at the Surrey History Centre, Woking, January 1999.

Responsibilities
The Parish 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 Parish 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 timely manner.

Retention Schedule
Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish 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.

Retention of Documents

Document		**Minimum Retention**	**Reason**
Minute Books	P	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	P/E	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	P/E	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	P	6 years	Audit
Cheque book stubs	P	Last completed audit	Audit
Paying in books	P	Last completed audit	Audit
Quotations	P/E	6 years	Audit
Paid invoices	P	6 years	Audit/VAT
VAT records	P/E	6 years	Audit/VAT
Salary records	P/E	6 years	Audit

Tax and NI records P/E	6 years	Audit
Insurance policies P/E	Whilst valid	Audit
Cert Employers Liability P/E	40 years	Audit/legal
Cert of public liability P/E	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register P/E	Indefinite	Audit
Deeds, leases P	Indefinite	Audit
Declarations of acceptance P	Term of Office + 1 year	Management
Members register of interests' P/E	Term of Office + 1 year (noted in minutes)	Management
Complaints P/E	1 year	Management
General information P/E	1 year	Management
Routine correspondence and e-mails P/E	1 year	Management
Project /topic based info	Length of project	Management

P - paper copy, E - electronic, P/E - both

Planning Applications
All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at MVDC. 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. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained in accordance with the table above.

Disposal procedures
All documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and disposed of.

Reviewed July 2026