**Document Retention and Disposal Policy**

**1. Introduction**

This policy outlines how Coleford Town Council manages its records and documents to ensure legal compliance, transparency, and efficient administration. It applies to both paper and electronic records.

**2. Purpose**

* To ensure records are retained for appropriate periods.
* To enable prompt and lawful disposal of unnecessary documents.
* To support good governance, accountability, and compliance with legislation including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Freedom of Information Act 2000, and Local Government Act 1972.

**3. Responsibilities**

* Coleford Town Council administrative office is responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring compliance.
* All staff and Councillors handling Council records must follow this policy.

**4. Retention Schedule**

| **Document Type** | **Retention Period** | **Notes/Legislation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Minutes (Council & Committees) | Permanently | Public record (LGA 1972, s.228) |
| Agendas and Reports | 6 years |  |
| Policies and Procedures | Until superseded + 1 year |  |
| Financial Accounts and Annual Returns | 6 years | Limitation Act 1980 |
| Invoices and Receipts | 6 years | HMRC requirements |
| Bank Statements and Reconciliations | 6 years |  |
| Payroll Records and Pensions | 6 years | HMRC guidance |
| Planning Applications (granted/refused) | 6 years | Non-council copies; refer to LPA if needed |
| Correspondence (General) | 2 years | Reviewed annually |
| Grant Applications (submitted and received) | 6 years | Audit and funding requirements |
| Insurance Policies | Permanently |  |
| Insurance Claims | 6 years after settlement |  |
| Deeds, Leases, Contracts | Permanently or 12 years post-end | Limitation Act 1980 |
| Personnel Files (former employees) | 6 years after leaving | Employment law |
| GDPR-related consents/logs | 6 years or while relevant | UK GDPR compliance |

**5. Disposal of Documents**

* Paper documents will be securely shredded.
* Electronic records will be permanently deleted.
* Disposal should be logged by the office with date, method, and authorisation.

**6. Data Protection**

All records containing personal data will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the UK GDPR. The Council will ensure that data is accurate, kept up to date, and only retained as long as necessary.

**7. Review and Policy Updates**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if legislation changes or operational needs require.

**Adopted: 27th May 2025 at Full Council**  
**Review Date: Year commencing 1st April 2026/27**