

PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Record Management and Security Policy – Version One June 2025

Ponthir Community Council realise 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 Council. This document provides the framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

The Community Council seeks to make standard management and operational documents, minutes, agendas and community documents available on the council's website www.ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Community Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Community 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. Emails will be purged regularly and deleted safely.

A small percentage of the Community Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research and interest.

Responsibilities

The Community 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 this Policy is the Clerk.

Procedures are in place to ensure that the Community Council complies with the General Data Protection Regulation. When dealing with personal details, Ponthir Community Council staff and Councillors must ensure that data:

- ☐ Must be processed lawfully, fairly and transparently.
- ☐ Is only used for a **specific processing purpose** that the data subject has been made aware of and no other, without further consent.
- ☐ Should be **adequate, relevant and limited** i.e. only the minimum amount of data should be kept for specific processing.
- ☐ Must be **accurate** and where necessary **kept up to date**.
- ☐ Should **not be stored for longer than is necessary**, and that storage is safe and secure.
- ☐ Should be processed in a manner that ensures **appropriate security and protection**.

Only the Clerk can normally directly access the data, which is held securely by a system of passwords, with the only exception being when she is on leave. It cannot be accessed by members of the public.

Ponthir Community Council may hold personal information about individuals such as their addresses, emails, and telephone numbers. This information is not available for public access.

All data stored on the Clerk's computer is password protected.

Once data falls outside the minimum retention time of Council's document retention

policy, it will be shredded or securely deleted from the Computer.

Retention of Documents or Electronic Data

The Community Council is required to maintain a retention schedule. There is a clear

need to retain documentation for audit purposes, staff management, tax liabilities, and the eventuality of legal disputes and legal proceedings. The schedule lays down the minimum length of time which the records needs to be retained for audit and other purposes and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use. Additional documents are also identified in a Management Schedule which are not subject to audit, staff management, tax liabilities and other purposes but for the general management of the Community Council or of historical interest.

Most legal proceedings are governed by the 'Limitations Acts' which state that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. The specified period varies, depending on the type of claim in question. If a type of legal proceeding falls into two or more categories, the documentation will be kept for the longer of the limitation period. As there is no limitation period in respect of Trusts, the Council will retain all trust deeds and scheme and other similar documentation.

The retention refers to records services regardless of the media in which they are stored.

Disclosure of Personal information

If an elected member of the Council needs to obtain personal information to help carry out their duties, this is acceptable. They are only able to obtain as much personal information as necessary and it should only be used for the specific purpose. If, for instance, someone has made a complaint about over hanging bushes in a garden, the Clerk may give a Councillor or the appropriate local authority the address and telephone number of the person who has made the complaint so they can help with the enquiry. Data should never be used for political reasons unless the data subjects have consented.

Schedule

Correspondence if related to audit matters and or legal proceedings should be kept for the appropriate period specified in the schedule unless the Community Council deems them to be relevant or useful or have historical interest to the Council.

For other correspondence including written or electrically generated (unless relating

to staff) should be retained for as long as it is useful and relevant.