



Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry (DWR)  
Community Council  
Rudry Parish Hall  
Rudry  
Caerphilly  
CF83 3DF

Email: [clerk@dwrCouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@dwrCouncil.co.uk)  
Website: [www.dwrCouncil.co.uk](http://www.dwrCouncil.co.uk)

**DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY**

**Review Date: Annually**

**Version Control:**

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# Document Retention Policy

## 1. Purpose of the Policy

This Document Retention Policy sets out how Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry Community Council manages, stores, and disposes of its records. The policy ensures compliance with:

- The Local Government Act 1972
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Audit requirements set by Audit Wales
- Good governance and transparency standards for community and town councils in Wales

The Council is committed to retaining information only for as long as necessary, ensuring secure storage, and disposing of records responsibly.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All councillors
- The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
- Any contractors or volunteers handling council information

It covers all formats of information, including:

- Paper records
- Electronic files
- Emails
- Photographs, maps, and plans
- Financial and governance documents

## 3. Principles

The Council will:

- Retain records only for the minimum period required
- Store records securely and restrict access appropriately
- Dispose of records safely and confidentially
- Maintain transparency while protecting personal data
- Ensure records needed for audit, legal, or historical purposes are preserved

## 4. Retention Schedule

### 4.1. Governance Records

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Minutes (signed)	Permanent	Legal record of decisions
Agendas	6 years	
Reports to Council/Committees	6 years	
Declarations of Acceptance of Office	Term of office +1 year	
Register of Members' Interests	Permanent	Update as required
Policies & Procedures	Until superseded +1 year	

#### 4.2. Financial Records

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Annual Accounts (final signed)	Permanent	Required for historical audit trail
Accounting records (ledgers, cashbooks)	7 years	Audit Wales requirement
Bank statements, reconciliations	7 years	
Invoices, receipts, orders	7 years	
VAT records	6 years	HMRC requirement
Grants received (incl. CIL)	7 years	CIL must be spent within 5 years

#### 4.3. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
CIL receipts & spending records	5 years from receipt	Charging authority may reclaim unspent funds
Annual CIL Report	Permanent	Must be published by 31 December each year

#### 4.4. Personnel Records

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Employee contracts	6 years after employment ends	
Payroll & pension records	6 years	
Recruitment records	1 year	For unsuccessful applicants
Training records	6 years	

#### 4.5. Asset & Property Records

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Asset Register	Permanent	Updated annually
Leases, licences, agreements	Duration of agreement +6 years	
Inspection reports (e.g., play areas)	6 years	

#### 4.6. Planning Records

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Planning applications (Council responses)	3 years	Originals held by Local Planning Authority
Neighbourhood/Community Plans	Permanent	If applicable

#### 4.7. Correspondence & General Administration

Document Type	Retention Policy	Notes
Routine correspondence	2 years	Unless part of a case file
Complaints (resolved)	3 years	
Complaints (unresolved or contentious)	6 years	

#### 4.8. Emails

Emails are retained according to the category of the information they contain. Routine emails should be deleted once no longer needed.

## **5. Storage and Security**

The Council will:

- Store paper records in locked cabinets
- Protect electronic records with passwords and secure backups
- Restrict access to personal data to authorised individuals only
- Use council-approved email accounts for official business

## **6. Disposal of Records**

Records must be disposed of securely:

- Confidential waste shredding for paper documents containing personal or sensitive data
- Permanent deletion of electronic files, including from backups where possible
- Transfer to archives where records have historical value

## **7. Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every year or sooner if legislation or best practice changes.