**Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
North Wales**

Records Management Policy

SWYDDFA **COMISIYNYDD HEDDLU A THROSEDD** GOGLEDD CYMRU | OFFICE OF THE **POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER** NORTH WALES

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Policy and Procedure Summary

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for North Wales is committed to create, keep and manage records which document its principle activities. The effective management of our records will enable us to comply with legal and regulatory obligations, preserve corporate memory and to manage our operations successfully.

This procedure has been adopted by the OPCC for North Wales and applies to all undertakings carried out on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Title:	Records Management Policy
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Policy Writer:	Executive Officer
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1.   Introduction

It is recognised that information is a vital asset of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for North Wales, which depends on reliable, up- to-date information systems to support the work that it does and the services provided to the citizens of North Wales.

Records management is vital to the delivery of our services in an orderly, efficient, and accountable manner. Effective records management will help ensure that we have the right information at the right time to make the right decisions. It will provide evidence of what we do and why, therefore protecting the interests of the Commissioner, his staff and all who interact with the OPCC. Records, and the information we preserve, are an important corporate asset.

We are committed to openness and transparency. We will create and manage records efficiently, make them accessible where possible, protect and store them securely and dispose of them safely at the right time. To support this policy we will ensure that all staff receive appropriate information and advice.

A copy of this policy will be published on our website so that the public can see the basis on which we manage our records.

Compliance will be monitored periodically by the Executive Officer and the policy will be reviewed every 4 years.

2.   Aims

The aim of this Records Management Policy is to ensure that our records:

- provide authoritative information about past actions and decisions for current business purposes;
- protect the legal and other rights of the OPCC, its staff and its stakeholders ie what assets we hold;
- explain, and if necessary justify, past actions in the event of an audit, public inquiry or other investigation i.e. expenditure of public funds, handling of an FOI request.

3.   Our Principals

Good records management relies on the following:

- the creation of appropriate records
- the capture of records (received or created) in record keeping systems
- the appropriate maintenance and upkeep of these records
- the regular review of information
- the controlled retention of information
- the controlled destruction of information

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Through adhering to these principles we will benefit from:

- records being easily and efficiently located, accessed and retrieved
- information being better protected and securely stored
- records being disposed of safely and at the right time

As a public body we are required by law to manage our records properly. Legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation and Freedom of Information Act 2000 set out specific requirements in relation to the creation and management of records.

4. What does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to the management of records, in all technical or physical formats or media, created or received by the OPCC in the conduct of its business activities.

Although not an exhaustive list, examples of items that can constitute records include:

- Documents (including written and typed documents and annotated copies)
- Computer files (including word processor files, databases, spreadsheets and presentations)
- Paper based files
- Electronic mail messages
- Diary records
- Fax messages
- Reports
- Intranet and Internet Web pages

5. Relevant legislation:

- Public Records Act 1958 and 1967
- Local Government Act 1972
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Environmental Information Regulations 1992 and Environment Information (Amendment) Regulations 1998

We will ensure that staff creating or filing records are aware of the need to give those records titles that reflect their specific nature and contents so as to facilitate retrieval. Where possible, records will be held electronically.

We will dispose of short lived material regularly ie print outs of electronic documents should not be kept after the meeting for which they were printed, trivial emails should be deleted after being read and keeping multiple or personal copies of documents will be discouraged.

6.   Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that information is appropriately managed. In addition, the roles listed below have specific tasks.

Chief Executive (Data Controller) – overall responsibility for the information management policy framework and for supporting its application throughout the organisation.

Executive Officer – responsible for ensuring policies, procedures and guidelines for good information management practice are in place, and for promoting compliance with these policies.

Administration Team – ensuring procedures are in place and the management of information is carried out in accordance with this policy and associated procedures. Maintaining folder classification schemes, file plans and retention and disposal schedules.

All Staff – responsible for following policies and procedures for managing information. All staff also have a responsibility to protect sensitive and personal information. They must not disclose it to unauthorised parties or allow it to be transmitted or transported in an unsecure way.

7.   Records Creation

Naming Conventions

A document name or title is often the first point of identification, so it is crucial that this name will sufficiently distinguish it from other documents. Adopting some basic naming conventions will allow us to enable consistency in naming documents and assist in navigation and searching and allow a shared understanding of the content and context of a document's content.

In addition to the naming convention agendas, minutes and reports are all to be saved in the relevant folder in date order in this format YYYY/MM/DD.

Version Control

The use of version control can greatly assist with retrieving records quickly and accurately. It allows users to track a document's progress during drafting and/or review and revert to previous versions if needed. Version control can be achieved by:

-      using a document control table at the beginning of a document (most useful for policies and records that tend to change over time)
-      adding version numbering in the title of a record
-      obsolete documents to be noted accordingly and moved to the 'Obsolete' folder

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Shared Drive

All documents to be saved on the shared drive which is accessible to all staff. Personnel documents will be accessible to the Chief Executive and Executive Officer only. Uniformity will ensure documents are easily located.

Emails

Emails are considered information under the terms of this policy and some emails will also be a business record. Emails which form a business record that need to be accessed and shared with other staff members should be saved in the relevant folder on the shared drive. This will ensure that they form a complete record with other associated documentation.

It is important that only essential business emails are saved to the shared drive. Documents which may be attached to an email and need to be saved as a corporate record, must be saved to the shared drive, and not simply retained on an email. This will ensure they are available to all staff who needs access to them.

Letters which are received by email will be recorded by the Administration Team on the correspondence log.

Retention

Records that are no longer required will be disposed of in accordance with our Retention and Destruction Policy.