



Wrexham County Borough Council

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

November 2004

Version 0.1

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1. Introduction

1.1 Wrexham County Borough Council recognises that records are a valuable asset and resource contributing to the corporate memory and knowledge base. This policy sets out the framework for establishing good records management practices to ensure that records are managed effectively and efficiently, and that the council complies with its statutory and regulatory obligations in line with the:

- Local Government (Wales) Act 1994,
- Data Protection Act 1998,
- Freedom of Information Act 2000,
- Environmental Information Regulations, 1992,
- requirements of other legislation governing Council's activities.

1.2 And, according to National and International standards on record keeping:-

- BS ISO 15489 Records Management
- BS-DISC PD series
- BS ISO 17799 Information Security Management

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all records created and maintained by the council during the course of its work.

2.2 Records are defined as recorded information of any kind created, received or maintained by the council in the transaction of its business, and which may subsequently be kept as evidence of such business.

2.3 Records management is defined as a field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the:-

- creation

- receipt
- maintenance
- use
- disposal of records

and includes processes for:-

- capturing;
- maintaining evidence of;
- maintaining information about;

business activities and transactions in the form of records. (BS ISO 15489: 2001 Records Management).

3. Objectives

3.1 The objectives of this policy are to ensure that records are:

- created only when required;
- authentic and reliable, and can be used as evidence and information of its actions and decisions;
- arranged to facilitate quick retrieval through the development of indexes and finding aids;
- kept for legal, administrative, fiscal and historical purposes;
- destroyed when they are no longer required according to the retention schedules;
- kept safely and securely (and confidentially as necessary) in an appropriate environment;

3.2 To help achieve these objectives it is important to:

- develop retention schedules to show how long records should be retained or disposed of accordingly;
- identify records that are of historic interest and transfer them to the archives.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Chief Executive and the Strategic Directors have corporate responsibility for this policy.

4.2 The Chief Officers have responsibility for this policy in their own department. The Chief Officer for Leisure, Libraries and Culture has operational responsibility for this policy as well as ensuring that a suitable training programme is established to raise staff awareness of records management, Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements.

4.3 Individual departments must have in place a departmental Link Officer nominated by their Chief Officer that is responsible for:

- ensuring that staff are aware of good practice in records management;
- ensuring that staff are creating and maintaining records that comply with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts;
- ensuring that staff are complying with the retention schedules
- participating in the Freedom of Information / Data Protection Working Group.

4.4 All employees are responsible for creating and maintaining records during the course of their work that are accurate, reliable and authentic.

4.5 The Council's Archivist/Records Manager is responsible for developing guidelines and procedures to promote good records management practices in order to be able to comply with this policy.

5. Relationship with Existing Policies

5.1 This policy will work alongside other policies and strategies already established, or to be developed within the council, including:-

- Freedom of Information

Records Management Policy

- Data Protection
- Information Strategy Statement
- I.S. policies
- Audit policies
- E-Government strategies
- Any departmental policies in existence on records management
- Data sharing protocols

6. Implementation

6.1 To encourage compliance with this policy, the Council's Archivist/Records Manager will produce a procedure manual for Records Management. This will include guidance on:

- creating and maintaining paper and electronic records;
- retention schedules for records;
- transferring records to the records management store;
- disposal policy;
- classification scheme;
- Electronic Records Management*

* An Electronic Records Management system will be developed in conjunction with the I.S. Department, and more guidelines will be established at this time.

7. Review of Policy

7.1 The Freedom of Information/Data Protection Working Group will review this policy each year to ensure that it conforms to record keeping legislation.