Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

Records Management Policy

Policy Statement

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Humberside is committed to create, keep and manage records which document its principal 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.

Introduction

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

Scope

This policy cover business records. Not all documents are records. A record shall be considered to be "information created, received, and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organisation or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business". It includes some – but not all – business emails as well as meeting minutes, memoranda, employment contracts, and accounting source documents.

Aims and Principles

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 i.e. what assets we hold;
- explain, and if necessary justify, past actions in the event of an audit, public inquiry or other investigation e.g. expenditure of public funds, handling of an FOI request.

The following documents support this policy:

- OPCC for Humberside Data Protection Policy
- Humberside Police Information Security Policy
- NPCC Review Retention and Disposal Schedule
- OPCC for Humberside Retention Policy

Relevant legislation:
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Environmental Information Regulations 1992 and Environment Information (Amendment) Regulations 1998
- Limitation Act (1980)

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 – for example, 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 is discouraged.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Senior Management Team – overall responsibility for the information management strategy and policy framework and for supporting its application throughout the organisation.

Data Protection Officer – responsible for ensuring policies, procedures and guidelines for good information management practice are in place, and for promoting compliance with these policies. Supporting the development of 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. Further advice is provided in the Humberside Police Information security Policy.

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.

Version Control

The use of version control can greatly assist with retrieving records quickly and accurately. It allow 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.

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 need access to them.

Retention

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

Future Development

Future updates will be required to record documents on the Pentana System:
- OPCC for Humberside Guidance on Version Control
- OPCC for Humberside Guidance on Naming Conventions