

**Summary:**

Records are an important asset of the council. It is the duty of *all* members of the council, *all* council staff *and* volunteers, *and* companies or persons providing services or undertaking contracts on behalf of Portsmouth City Council to create full, accurate and reliable records of their actions. They should manage those records to ensure they are kept safe and to meet the demands of the law and of regulatory bodies.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their section's records are properly managed.

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<b>Approval</b>	<b>Director for Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services</b>
<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>Director for Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services</b>
<b>Policy Author</b>	Records Manager
<b>Advice &amp; Guidance</b>	Records Manager
<b>Location</b>	PolicyHub
<b>Related Documents</b>	PCC policies, legislation, regulations for particular areas of activity
<b>Applicability</b>	All councillors, council staff, volunteers and contractors in the course of council business

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## 1 Introduction

Portsmouth City Council, on behalf of the citizens it represents, holds a large amount of information. This information relates to individuals and places in the city as well as records of decisions made by the council, the reasons for these decisions and the actions it took. The council recognises that its records are an important public asset, vital to operating effectively, policy-making and defending citizens' rights.

In addition the council is bound to keep good records by legislation, statutory instruments and codes, such as the local government acts, EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (data protection legislation), The Freedom of Information Act (2000), The Environmental Information Regulations (2004), The Local Government Transparency Code (2015) and by regulating bodies overseeing particular aspects of its activities, such as the Care Quality Commission. Modern technology has made far easier the creation of records, and copies of them, in an ever-greater range of media. At the same time technological change threatens to make records inaccessible as the formats in which they were created become out-of-date.

Like any asset, records require careful management and this policy sets out how the council intends to manage its records to meet these obligations and thereby preserve its corporate memory.

## 2 Purpose

This policy is to make clear Portsmouth City Council's commitment to create good records of its activities and to manage them effectively. These records will allow it to:

- Make better decisions

- Defend the rights of the city's inhabitants
- Be held accountable for the actions of council and staff
- Carry out council business more effectively and efficiently
- Meet legal and regulatory requirements

### 3 Scope

This policy covers all records in any format made by all councillors, council staff, volunteers and contractors in the course of council business as a record of that business.<sup>1</sup> It does not cover notes not required as a record, or published information; nevertheless some of such items may still be subject to data protection legislation and should be disposed of securely.

### 4 Statement of Policy

It is the responsibility of *all* members of the council, *all* council staff *and* volunteers, *and* companies or persons providing services or undertaking contracts on behalf of Portsmouth City Council, to, when undertaking council business:

- Keep full, accurate and reliable records appropriate for the actions being recorded, whatever the medium in which they are created. Where record content and format has been laid down in council procedures, these procedures should be followed
- Create new types of records and ICT systems only after consulting records management or information governance staff
- Ensure that the records are filed (physically or electronically) in the correct place with filenames, indexes or metadata created so that they can be retrieved when required
- Ensure that the records are stored secure from unauthorised access or alteration
- Store records in an environment which will prevent their physical deterioration<sup>2</sup>
- Ensure that the records will be maintained in a format allowing them to be read regardless of technological change
- Keep draft, duplicate and surrogate copies of records only as long as needed for immediate business purposes
- Ensure that the records are disposed of when no longer required for business purposes (with the guidance of the PCC Retention Schedule and records management staff) by destruction or transfer to the city archives as an historical record
- Destroy records, including drafts, surrogates and duplicates, only in accordance with the council's Disposal Procedures

Managers at all levels have particular responsibility to ensure their section's records are properly managed.

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<sup>1</sup> For a definition of a record see Definitions, below.

<sup>2</sup> For example, protect them from dirt, damp or mould.

The council will also ensure that vital records are protected to enable it to function and recover swiftly after a disaster. Business continuity plans and procedures will be in place to guide rapid recovery.

The council will require all staff to undertake periodic training with respect to record management along with accessing appropriate training with regard to data protection legislation and the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

## 5 Definitions

- Destruction** Rendering records unreadable and removing them from council premises. If the data in the records includes information that is defined as personal in the DPA 2018 or commercially sensitive then physical destruction should be carried out according to the council's Disposal Procedures
- Disposal** The process of deciding and implementing the fate of records that are no longer required for normal business purposes. It may involve transfer to the Portsmouth History Centre to become part of the city's historical archive or destruction
- Records** Records are "information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business".<sup>3</sup> They may be in any format, including electronic or printed documents, audio or video recordings, photographs or handwritten notes of telephone conversations and messages.

## 6 Monitoring Compliance

Compliance will be monitored by the council's records manager.

## 7 Related Policies

Adult Social Care policies

Children's Services policies

Financial Rules Parts A-D; General, Planning, Management & Accounting, 2015

Financial Rules Parts 5-7 (E-T) 2015

Health & Safety policies

Human Resources policies

IR35 Workers Policy

Information Governance policies

IT policies

Learning & Development policies

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<sup>3</sup> BS ISO 15489-1:2001 Information and documentation – Records management – Part 1: General.

The Portsmouth City Council retention schedule can be found on the PCC website at: <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/your-council/policies-and-strategies/corporate-retention-schedule>

## **8 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in November 2023 and, thereafter, every three years. Authority to make minor amendments is delegated to the Director for Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services, or the director responsible for the Modern Records Section after administrative reorganization.