

RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY



Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

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Equality Impact Assess on:			
At the time of ratifying this procedure and at the time of all subsequent reviews, the author and the owner of this procedure are satisfied that this document complied with relevant legislation.			

Version control			
Date	Version	Name	Changes
	1/Draft	E Robertson	Policy created
29/09/2016	1.1	E Allison	Amendments
09/03/2022	1.2	D Taylor	Amendments

Related documents
All documents within the OPCC Information Management Strategy

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire (OPCC) will ensure that information is not kept for longer than is necessary, and will retain the amount of information that necessary to carry out its statutory functions. This policy supports the OPCC Publication Scheme and its plans and strategies and is designed to provide clarity and consistency in records management.

INTRODUCTION

2. Retention periods are given in whole years and are from the end of the financial year to which the records relate. Records should be disposed of by arranging for collection of confidential waste for destruction or shredding, including all copies on whatever format. Where possible, and in particular in relation to sensitive documents, it is preferable to store the information electronically. This is not only more secure but also requires less physical storage space. Electronic records will be permanently deleted at the appropriate point in time.

3. Aside from the standard procedure, set out below, whenever there is a possibility of litigation, a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or a Subject Access Request under Data Protection legislation, any records that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has ended, the Subject Access Request has been actioned or the appeal processes under the Freedom of Information Act have been exhausted. In these circumstances the Monitoring Officer (the Chief Executive) should be consulted prior to the disposal of the relevant records.

4. All data and documentation not held within the estate are retained in accordance with the Constabulary's Using the Off-Site Storage Facility for Physical Records policy. A record of which documentation and data is held off site is maintained by the OPCC.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

5. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 introduced new rights of access to information which inevitably impacts upon the OPCC's records management and Publication Scheme. The public has a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, subject to certain exceptions (providing the public interest in disclosure does not outweigh the public interest in maintaining an exemption).

6. Information is exempt from the provisions of the Act if it is accessible by other means. If the information is already covered in the OPCC's Publication Scheme and is available via the website there will not be a requirement to provide that information in response to an individual request.

7. It is an offence under the Freedom of Information Act to make the decision to delete or amend information relating to a Freedom of Information Request with a view to preventing disclosure. The maximum penalty for such an offence currently stands at £5,000.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

8. It is recognised that information is a vital asset of the OPCC, and the Office depends on reliable, up-to-date information systems to support the work that it does and the services provided to the public of Cheshire. This policy and standards will help the OPCC to:-

- a) Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the OPCC to operate.
- b) Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the other relevant legislation.
- c) Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily.
- d) Minimise the administrative overhead to the OPCC and save money in terms of storage costs where hard copy information is taking up office space and electronic documents are using excessive storage capacity on computer equipment such as network servers.
- e) Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations.

STANDARD PROCEDURE

9. This procedure applies to records which do not need to be retained. Information which is duplicated, unimportant or of short term use can be destroyed under this standard procedure, including:

- a) compliment slips
- b) catalogues and trade journals
- c) telephone message slips
- d) non-acceptance of invitations
- e) messages or notes not related to OPCC business
- f) requests for standard information provided by the OPCC
- g) out of date distribution lists
- h) working papers which lead to a final report (including OPCC and decision making papers etc.)

i) duplicated and superseded material such as stationery, manuals, drafts, address books and reference copies of annual reports

j) e-copies of documents where a hard copy has been printed and filed.

10. The attached Schedules set out the retention periods for particular records

Ref	Decision making	Records	Retention
1.1	Management Board, Scrutiny Board, Quasi-Judicial Meetings, Audit Advisory Committee	Minutes	Permanent
1.2		Agendas & reports	Permanent
1.3		Management decisions	Permanent
1.4	Working Groups / Ad hoc groups (if administered by the OPCC)	Minutes	10 years
1.5		Agendas & reports	3 years
1.6	Constabulary Groups / Boards / Meetings	Agendas & reports	Not retained - originals to be kept by Constabulary
1.7	Corporate planning & reporting	Police and Crime Plan Annual Report Business Plans Statement of Accounts	Permanent
1.8		Strategies (Final versions of OPCC strategies only)	Until superseded
1.9	Partnership agendas and external meetings	Minutes, agendas & reports	Not retained - originals to be kept by host authority

Ref	Human Resources	Records	Retention
2.1	Appointment of • Chief Constable, • Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner • Statutory Officers	Advertisements Application forms Interview notes	6 years (or until appointment of replacement, whichever is the later)
2.2		Personnel files	Retained whilst in office After retirement destroyed after 10 years
2.3	Complaints against Chief Constable	Correspondence	10 years
2.4	Complaints against Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.	Correspondence	10 years
2.5	Complaint Reviews	Correspondence PSD information used to make determination Review findings	6 years
2.6	Volunteering • Independent Custody Visiting; • Dog Welfare; • Call Audits; • Front desk audits; • Ethics Panel; • Consultation	Notes, agendas & reports	6 years
2.7		Record of visits	8 years
2.8		Volunteer details	3 years after end of appointment
2.9		Handbook / guidance	Until superseded
2.10	Register of PCC and DPCC	Register of interests Register of hospitality	Permanent

Ref	Human Resources	Records	Retention
2.11	Staff recruitment	Application forms (unsuccessful) Interview notes Completed Vetting Forms	Destroyed after interview
2.12	Volunteer recruitment	Application forms (unsuccessful) Interview notes Completed vetting forms	Destroyed after interview
2.13	Accident book	Online via Oracle	Permanent

Ref	Management Information / Administration	Records	Retention
3.1	Attendance records	Attendance sheets	3 years
3.2	Commissioner's formal responses	HMICFRS Police & Crime Panel	6 years
3.3	Policy development	Scheme of Corporate governance	When superseded
3.4		Policies & Procedures	1 year after revision
3.5	Information management	General Correspondence	3 years
3.6	FOI Requests	Completed requests	2 years from conclusion of any appeal or complaint process
3.7	Subject Access Requests	Completed requests	2 years (unless involved in another process eg complaint)

Ref	Management Information / Administration	Records	Retention
3.7	Media relations	Press releases	3 years
3.8	Marketing material	Information about the OPCC & its work	When superseded
3.9	Diaries & calendars	Electronic & manual	May be deleted at year end as required.

Ref	Finance	Records	Retention
4.1	Financial records	Information regarding contracts & grants	6 years after the end of the contract / grant
4.2	Account Records	Supporting documents	6 years
4.3	Budget Records	Supporting documents	6 years
4.4	Records regarding financial decision making	Management decision / Management Board papers	Permanent
4.5	Audit records	Final reports	Permanent
4.6	Expenditure	Receipts (where applicable - eg VAT reclaimable)	7 years