

## What local authority records should be transferred to the Record Office for permanent retention?

The best guidance for drawing up a retention policy, and therefore identifying which classes of records should be offered for permanent retention, is the Records Management Society's (RMS) *Retention Guidelines for Local Government* (2003).

<http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/resources>

This guidance is generic by nature, which makes it sufficiently flexible to adapt to any local government structure.

Each section within the guidelines relates to a local government function such as *Legal and Contracts, Planning and Land Use, Human Resources* etc. Moreover each section gives specific guidance on which classes of records should be offered to the Archivist for appraisal/permanent retention.

For instance, the Statutory Services section of the guidelines states that notices in relation to marriages such as wedding banns should be destroyed 2 years after last action (5.4), whilst the Coroner's registration of reported deaths should always be offered to the Archivist for permanent retention "after their administrative use is concluded". (5.5)

It should be noted that Records Management Society's *Retention Guidelines for Local Government*, **are only** guidelines. They must be underpinned by a thorough understanding of the legislative environment in which local authorities operate.

Other useful standards and guidance can be found on The National Archives (TNA) website such as the TNA's policy on acquisition.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/acquisition.htm>

It has been assumed that an analysis of business activity has been carried out for each functional area of the authority and an identification of the record keeping requirement completed. Internal staff are the best placed to perform these audits. While the archivist can give general guidance on the types of records which an archive repository would seek to collect, it is the role of the records/information manager to identify records which have arrived at the disposition stage (when they are no longer administratively useful or subject to any statutory record keeping requirements), and to offer selected records to the archivist for appraisal. The archivist can then be invited to appraise the records to decide whether or not they are worthy of permanent preservation.

In general terms the Record Office seeks to collect records which document:

- The core functions, activities and management systems of our local authorities: 'their corporate memory'.
- Events of historical significance – records which are likely to be of interest to researchers in the future.

Core functions will include policy and administrative records which record the way the organisation functions, its decisions and major alterations in its responsibilities and processes. Minutes (preferably signed) and reports, final accounts, registers etc. would all fall into this category.

Major events can be interpreted as those of national significance or which advanced or changed the work of the organisation although press and publicity records may also be worth retaining. If in doubt, Record Office staff will be able to advise in specific instances.

When appraising series of records the archivist will be mindful of the criteria listed above, but also of the need to avoid duplicating records and information that has already been deposited at the record office.

If the informational and historical value of a particular series of records is unclear or you have any other queries concerning transferring records to the archives, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Record Office for further advice on these issues.

### **Glamorgan Record Office**

Glamorgan Record Office  
The Glamorgan Building  
King Edward VII Avenue  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff, CF10 3NE

Tel: (029) 2078 0282

Email: [glamro@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:glamro@cardiff.ac.uk)

### **Gwent Record Office**

County Hall  
Cwmbran, NP44 2XH

Tel: 01633 644886

Email: [gwent.records@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:gwent.records@torfaen.gov.uk)

### **Powys County Archives Office**

County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

Tel: 01597 826088

Email: [archives@powys.gov.uk](mailto:archives@powys.gov.uk)

## **Summarised list of records cited in the Records Management Society's (RMS) Retention Guidelines for Local Government (2003).**

### **DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES**

- Elections
- Electoral register
- Council and Committee minutes
- Council minutes
- Council agenda and business papers
- Council notice papers and proceedings•
- Indexes
- Committee minutes

- Registers of delegations to Special Committees

#### Partnership, Agency and External Meetings

- Agendas
- Minutes
- Council reports
- Recommendations

### **MANAGEMENT**

#### Corporate Planning and Reporting

- Corporate Plans
- Strategy Plans
- Business Plans
- Annual Reports
- Strategic management team minutes

#### Policy, Procedures, Strategy and Structure

- Policy, procedure, precedent, instructions
- Organisation charts
- Education plan
- Asset management plan
- Children' s services plan
- Community strategy
- Community plan
- Community safety plan

#### Information Management

- Classification schemes
- Registers
- Indexes
- Authorised lists of file headings

#### Enquiries and Complaints

- Indexes
- Registers
- Reports
- Returns
- Correspondence

#### Media publications

- Press cuttings
- Media reports

## Civic and Royal Events

- Visitors' book
- Audio tapes
- Video tapes
- Photographs

## **SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

### Child Protection

- Schedule 1 offenders register

### Residential homes

- Children's/adults home Registers
- Admissions registers
- Discharge registers

### Housing Provision

- Council housing Register

## **STATUTORY SERVICES**

### Registrars of Births Deaths and Marriages

- Deaths register
- Births register
- Marriage register

### Coroners

- Reported deaths register
- Coroner's case files

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### Personnel administration

- Employment Register - Permanent Staff
- Employment Register - Temporary Staff
- Employment Register - Casual Staff
- Registers of personnel files
- Personal History cards
- Superannuation history cards
- Salary master record

### Employee and Industrial Relations

- Generic agreements and awards
- Negotiations
- Disputes

- Claims lodged

#### Appointments of Statutory Officers

- Magistrates register
- Appointment Files

### **FINANCE**

#### Accounts & Audit

- Consolidated annual reports
- Consolidated financial statements
- Statement of financial position
- Operating statements
- General ledger
- Annual budget
- Loans registers

#### Council Tax Valuation

- Valuation lists
- Correspondence
- Objections
- Reports
- Rate Books
- Rate Cards
- Register of Rateable Properties

#### Summary Assets Management

- Schedules of acquisitions
- Consolidated current asset reports
- Annual reports
- Summary of current assets
- Asset registers

### **PROPERTY AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

#### Property and Land Management

- Consolidated property & buildings annual reports
- Summary of leased property
- Summary of local authority's owned property
- Site register
- Register of leases

#### Property Acquisition and Disposal

- Plans
- Legal documents relating to the sale

- Particulars of sale documents
- Tender documents
- Conditions of contracts
- Project specifications
- Plans
- Installation manuals
- Certificates of approval

#### Insurance

- Insurance register

### **GENERAL**

#### Emergency Planning

- Major Incident Plan

#### Registration, Certification and Licensing

- Visual impairment register
- Diesel licences
- Petroleum licences
- Health and safety licensing
- Hazardous substances
- Contaminated land register/pollution
- Organisation files
- Child carers files
- Childcare registration
- Day care registration
- Children's home registers

#### Bye-Laws

- Master Set of bye-laws
- Correspondence
- Submissions

#### Cemeteries & Crematoria

- Register of interments
- Cemetery register
- Cemetery plans

#### Disposal of Waste

- Waste site plans

### **PLANNING AND LAND USE**

- Planning Scheme Development
- Structure Plan

- Local Plan
- Town Centre plans
- Unitary Development
- Consultation documents and replies
- Inquiries and objections made by members of public
- Public Inquiry Documents
- Sites and Monuments records
- Ecological records
- Species records
- Historically listed buildings
- Definitive map
- Commons registration
- Successful Waste Planning applications
- Successful Mineral Planning applications
- Amendments to definitive map
- Mineral Register
- Applications for mineral extraction
- Land Use
- Waste Planning application consultation
- Mineral Planning applications consultation
- Objections
- Inquiries – Public etc
- Archaeological: advice/conditions
- Planning application register
- Tree preservation orders
- Building Control Registers
- Building files
- Plans
- Specifications
- Correspondence
- Applications
- Permits
- Certificates

## **TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Structure Plan
- Local transport plan
- Definitive map
- Correspondence concerning enquiries and disputes
- Amendments to definitive map
- Road adoption
- Enquiries,
- Consultation documents, objections and correspondence

## **SCHOOLS**

- Governors' Minutes
- School Plans
- Circulars from LEA
- HMI reports

- Circulars from DfES