

# **COMPANIES HOUSE RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

**‘Companies House will document its business activities with Records that are complete, authentic, reliable, secure and accessible and manage those records in accordance with all applicable legislative requirements throughout their lifecycle’**

A records management policy is essential for good corporate governance. Companies House is committed to implementing best records management practices and systems to ensure the creation, maintenance and protection of accurate and reliable records.

Any queries about the policy or about record management issues generally should be addressed to the Departmental Records Officer – Debbie Richards.

## **2. ABOUT THE POLICY**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the creation and management of records within CH. CH is committed to establishing and maintaining records management practices that meet its business needs, accountability requirements and stakeholder expectations.

### **Scope**

Records Management is about managing information from the moment it is received or created, until it is destroyed or transferred to another organisation e.g. The National Archives.

### **Legislative framework**

All CH records are Public Records under the Public Records Acts and must be kept in accordance with following statutory and legislative guidelines:

- Companies Acts
- Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

### **Responsibility**

The policy is owned by the Companies House Departmental Record Officer (DRO), on behalf of the organisation, however all staff has some measure of responsibility for the management and preservation of records for as long as they are required.

### **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

#### **Information Management**

Records created and received in the course of Companies House business are the property of Companies House and not of the employee, agent or contractor who created or received them.

Record management procedures will be implemented which ensure that records of official business are:

- reliable, authentic and complete irrespective of the medium;
- created in line with the needs of the creating department and of the wider organisation;
- captured into authorised systems which make them readily accessible to everyone with a legitimate need to use them;
- maintained, stored and preserved for the period of their usefulness to the business unit and, if appropriate, to external stakeholders;
- disposed of in accordance with a defined and approved retention / disposal process.

#### **Creation of Records**

The decision to register a document as a formal record will be based on the significance and importance of the document to the delivery of the business. To ensure that they are reliable as evidence, records need to be authentic. Authenticity requires that records are captured, managed and preserved in an organised system, which maintains their integrity and context.

All business systems used by Companies House must be capable of capturing, maintaining and providing evidence of its business activities over time to satisfy our record-keeping needs.

#### **Security and Access**

CH will take all reasonable steps to ensure that records are secure from accidental or wilful damage, destruction or misuse.

In making records available outside Companies House, the Registrar will comply with the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

#### **Retention, Review and Disposal**

No records will be retained on an indefinite basis. All records will be subject to retention schedules specifying the period for which they will be maintained. When the agreed retention period expires, records will be reviewed and, if merited, transferred to The National Archives for permanent preservation or destroyed without further consideration.

### **Permanent Preservation of Historical Records**

Companies House will meet its obligation to identify and safeguard records worthy of permanent preservation for historical reasons.