

19<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## Policy, Projects and Resources Committee

### Policy for Document Retention

**Report of:** Daniel Toohey – Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services

**Wards Affected:** All

**This report is:** Public

#### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 In this report, Members are asked to consider and adopt a policy and schedule covering document retention and destruction.

#### 2. Recommendation(s)

<p><b>2.1 That Members note and approve the attached Document Retention Policy and Schedule (Appendix A), with delegated authority granted to the Head of Legal Services to revise and update as necessary from time to time.</b></p>
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#### 3. Introduction and Background

3.1 The Council retains a large number of files and documentation either electronically or in hard copy form stored at the depot or in general storage. This has been substantially reduced over time, as matters have been reviewed and information destroyed when no longer required, using confidential waste destruction processes.

3.2 This process was substantially increased as part of the move out of the Council's Town Hall during redevelopment and refurbishment, both during the move and subsequent to it as part of the ongoing review of storage of materials.

3.3 As part of the ongoing review of documents, and with the Council formally entering into a new Human Resources contract with Thurrock Council in March, the document retention policy has also been reviewed and the resulting new document is attached for member consideration.

#### **4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The document sets out the Council's responsibilities and activities in regard to best practice in the management of its records. Compliance with this policy will assist in eliminating unnecessary records, reduce storage costs, improve working practices and enable the authority to support its management and storage of documents in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 4.2. The schedule sets out the legislation, guidance and best practice regarding record retention and incorporates Retention Guidelines as issued by the Records Management Society of Great Britain. Where there is no recommended or statutory retention/destruction date, the schedule proposes a corporate time period based on common practice.
- 4.3 Members are therefore asked to consider and approve the Document Retention Policy and Schedule.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 Reviewing records assists in the specific requirement to properly manage all records created in accordance with council policies and legislation. It also assists in the smooth conduct of business to ensure cost-effective use of records is maintained. Reviews ensure that records no longer required are properly destroyed which supports the council's operations. However, it is also used to prevent the premature destruction of records and to identify those records worthy of permanent preservation.

#### **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 No consultation is required in advance of submission of this report to Committee.

#### **7. References to Corporate Plan 2016-2019**

- 7.1 With regard to the priority: 'Community and Health' this report supports Businesses, safeguards public safety and enhances standards locally through risk-based regulatory compliance with the Data Protection legislation.

#### **8. Implications**

##### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts – Interim Chief Finance Officer**  
**Tel/Email: 01277 312829/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 Effective retention of documents will minimise the space required for storage, reducing accommodation costs.

## **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312860/daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk**

8.2 Legal issues and implications are set out in the body of this report and appendices.

## **9. Background Papers**

9.1 GDPR project file held in Legal Services.

## **10. Appendices to this report**

10.1 Appendix A - Data Retention Policy & Schedule

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Phil Devonald

**Telephone:** 01277 312500

**E-mail:** phil.devonald@brentwood.gov.uk