

Open Consultation

Good Records Management Matters Consultation Document:

We are seeking your views on changes to the statutory guidance on Good Records Management Matters.

Consultation Closing Date: 1 November 2021

Purpose of the consultation

The consultation seeks views on the changes to statutory guidance on Good Records Management Matters.

Background

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) is seeking views on proposed changes to the Ombudsman's Guidance on Good Administrative practice. Section 34 of the Public Services Ombudsman Wales Act 2019 empowers the PSOW to issue such guidance. Public bodies which fall within the PSOW's remit must have regard to the PSOW's Guidance when discharging their functions. When investigating complaints, the PSOW may consider the extent to which a public body has complied with the PSOW's Guidance on Good Administrative practice when reaching decisions.

The current Guidance is in the [Principles of Good Administration and Good Records Management](#). We are proposing to split the Guidance into 2 separate publications; the "[Principles of Good Administration](#)" and "[Good Records Management](#)". By splitting the Guidance our aim is to provide public bodies and complainants with both clear general principles of good administrative practice and separate specific advice on good administrative practice in relation to records management. This consultation document refers to our proposed guidance on Good Records Management Matters.

The proposed guidance on Good Records Management Matters

The aim of this guide is to demonstrate the importance of keeping good quality records and to explain why a culture of good record keeping is vital for a responsive public sector. Its content is formed from our experience of complaint handling and investigations carried out over many years. [You can view the draft guidance on the Good Records Management Matters here.](#)

We know that the job of delivering services to members of the public is a busy and challenging one. However, we are aware that for many organisations the practice of good record keeping is not given the priority it deserves.

The importance of good record keeping cannot be overstated. Records provide evidence of activity; they can help to explain why a decision was made, who made it and when. They are necessary to create confidence in any decision-making process,

to promote accountability and transparency, and to enable others to verify what has been done. Good record keeping is therefore vital for corporate memory.

Good records management also assists public authorities in fully complying with their obligations under information rights legislation.

Consultation Questions

1. Is the change in the use of 'Key Messages' instead of 'Principles' helpful?
2. Are the expectations of good records management set out in the 'Key Messages' clear and easy to understand?
3. Will the key messages help you manage your records effectively when delivering your services and is the level of detail sufficient to help you apply them?

If not, what changes would you suggest?

4. Is the inclusion of case studies to highlight the impact of poor records management on organisations and citizens be useful?
5. What effects could the guidance have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

6. Do you have any other comments about the Good Records Management Guidance or related matters that you would like to share?

How to respond

Submit your response by midnight **1 November 2021** in any of the following ways:

- Complete our [online form](#)
- Download, complete our [online form](#) and email communications@ombudsman.wales
- Download, complete our [online form](#) and post to:
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae,
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

[You may view this document in Welsh](#). If you need it in another format, please [contact us](#).

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- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

Responses to consultations maybe be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tell us.

Please see our [General Privacy Notice](#) for further details about the information the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR. Our [Consultations Privacy Notice](#) has more information about how we use your data for consultations.