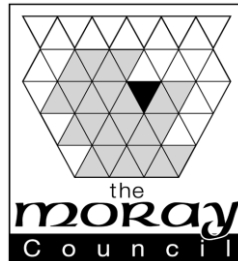


Element 7 – Archiving policy and transfer arrangements

Appendix 16



Records Management

Archive Collections

Appraisal Policy

Version 2.0
May 2011

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INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed for the Archive Collections of The Moray Council, currently held by the Local Heritage Centre as part of the guidance on records management. It refers to all records created by The Moray Council whether paper or electronic. Certain records have been identified as being suitable for further appraisal or sampling in the council retention schedule.

Within the Council all records are created for a business or administrative purpose. The majority of these records can be disposed of by destruction once that purpose has been fulfilled and all legal, business and accountability requirements for their retention have been met. There are some records that, because of the purpose for which they were created, the activity they document and the information they contain, have enduring value to the Council due to their historical or cultural content. By the process of appraisal, these records will be identified and retained permanently as part of the Moray Council Archives.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all records which will be transferred to the archive in all mediums (paper files, electronic data, microfilm etc).

This policy has been drawn up with the intention to support, but not to replace the professional judgement of staff when making decisions on the selection of records for permanent preservation in the Moray Council Archive.

The policy forms part of a suite of policies and should be read in conjunction with the Archive Collecting Policy and the Retention Schedule.

APPRAISAL POLICY

Appraisal is a function of records management, and involves identifying and distinguishing records that are deemed to have continuing value from those of no further value, and to ensure the records of value are preserved and those of no value are destroyed. Such records will be appraised for their continued and future business, cultural and historical importance to the Moray area.

This policy will take into account both digital and paper records.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation have resulted in a need for more openness and accountability in government, and, in terms of records management, provide justifiable reasons for keeping or destroying records. As such it is vital to have a policy in place, which influences the manner of appraisal and selection.

The Council will ensure the continued and timely transfer of records of long-term value to the archives, and that preservation is undertaken on a continual basis.

The Council will ensure to select records of the highest archival value and which reflect the functions of the Council or the culture and way of life in Moray, avoiding duplication.

THE MORAY COUNCIL ARCHIVE (LOCAL HERITAGE CENTRE)

The aim of the archives is to build a comprehensive picture of the Council, and also which reflects the cultural heritage and way of life in Moray. The value of any archive depends on the breadth and depth of coverage and consistency of the material acquired.

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The Archive represents the corporate memory of the Council and contains those records which are deemed to have continuing and permanent value because they contain evidence of decisions and decision-making processes. The archive also represents the memory of the community of Moray, and as such, contains those records, which are deemed to reflect the culture, history and way of life of Moray in all its richness.

All records, which are selected for permanent retention, must be kept in the Archive under the care of the Archivist (currently the Local Heritage Officer) in an environment that is most appropriate for that particular record to ensure its long-term preservation. Where conservation is required, this will be conducted according to the highest professional standards.

All materials in the archive will be catalogued in accordance with international standards, *for example*: ISAD (G) (International Standard of Archival Description). The Adlib software is being used for this purpose.

Items in the Archive will be available for the public to view. However when a record is in a fragile condition the Archivist reserves the right to make a copy of the record (where this is possible) for viewing rather than the original, or other such plan depending on the nature of the record. Certain records which contain personal, sensitive or confidential information will remain closed according to guidance issued by the Association of Scottish Local Authority Archivists working group (ASLAWG) in 2009 and under Data Protection legislation.

APPRAISAL AND SELECTION

Aims of Appraisal

The aims of appraisal are to:

- ◆ determine which records have the highest archival value:
 - those records which are most capable of documenting change, continuity and development over time and of assisting historical interpretation of such changes
 - document the functions of an organisation as a whole
- ◆ avoid duplication in the selection of archival material
- ◆ develop consistent appraisal decisions

Determining the value of records

There are two elements to the term 'value':

- the primary value to the creating organisation or individual, and
- the secondary value to society, by providing a resource for historical research to a wide range of future users.

When determining whether a record has a value it is worthwhile looking at the following:

- ◆ Administrative value – records which provide information on former activities and decisions to provide background information, establish the existence of a precedent or to substantiate or refute a claim or allegation
- ◆ Financial value – documentary evidence of the way in which monies were obtained, planned, allocated, controlled and expended

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- ◆ Legal value – records which will provide the source of the authority for actions taken by the Council or individuals and show evidence of title, contractual obligations, duties and privileges.
- ◆ Historical and cultural value – records which provide corporate memory of the activities of the Council and of Moray community. This will include those records created for the purposes highlighted in the above points, but will also include records of single or significant events, which will provide evidence for the history of Moray.

Identifying records worthy of permanent preservation

By examining the above values and assessing levels of importance attached to those factors, it is possible to establish which records should be retained permanently.

The Archive will aim to collect:

- ◆ Records that document policy formation.
- ◆ Records that show the development of the Council's fabric and infrastructure
- ◆ Records that show evidence of important decisions or precedent
- ◆ Records showing the development of the relationship between stakeholders
- ◆ Records that show the development of departments and organisational change
- ◆ Records that highlight significant areas of work

In particular, records should be collected of the highest archival value in respect of:

- ◆ Events
- ◆ Institutions
- ◆ Policies
- ◆ Processes and procedures
- ◆ Community of Moray, for example: plans, photographs
- ◆ Events in Moray
- ◆ Social development, including demographic, cultural and economic change
- ◆ Changes to the physical environment

Appraisal principles

All records appraisal should be guided by the following principles:

- i) It is the policy of the Archives to continually strive to develop consistency across all appraisal decisions
- ii) It is the policy for the creating departments to weed files (to remove individual pieces of paper from a file, *for example*: duplicates, superseded copies) prior to transfer to the Archives. Archival staff may not have the knowledge required or the time to do it, and the reduction in file size does not justify the staff time required to do it.

TIMING AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES OF APPRAISAL

When should appraisal be	<u>1st Review:</u> To assess the future business use of the record
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conducted?	To attach retention periods to the records (senior staff + Records Manager) <u>2nd Review:</u> To assess the historical value of the record This should take place once the record has reached the end of its business life, according to the corporate Retention Schedules, and the record should either be destroyed, sampled, reviewed or transferred. The Records Manager/Archivist to determine whether to retain permanently.
Who should conduct appraisal?	<u>1st Review:</u> Creating departments, based on the corporate Retention Schedules Advice from the Records Manager will be available <u>2nd Review:</u> At the time when a record has reached the end of its retention, it should either be destroyed or transferred to the Archives. The Records Manager/Archivist should determine whether the record should be preserved in the Archives.

GLOSSARY

The Archive Collections

The corporate memory of the Council and Moray Community, and which house records and material that have been appraised, and considered to be of continuing value and as such are kept for permanent preservation.

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities/community needs to determine which records need to be kept and how long the records need to be kept to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.

Current Records

Those records required for the day-to-day functioning of an organisation or individual. Also known as active or live records.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include deletion or destruction from record keeping systems or the transfer of records to the archives.

Digital or Electronic Records

Records, which can be created or received, stored and retrieved, maintained and transferred in digital form. They may be in the form of databases, electronic mail, spreadsheets, word-processing files, or multi-media communications.

Record

Recorded information, in any form.

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Retention Period

The length of time a record is kept before disposal by destruction or transfer to the archive.

Retention Schedule

A systematic listing of records created by an organisation which sets out the retention periods of records from the time of their creation to their disposal.

Semi-current records (semi-active records)

Those records which are no longer current for business purposes which are required so infrequently in the conduct of business that it is no longer necessary for them to be kept in the creating departments. Can be stored out of office space.