Evenwood & Barony Parish Council

Records Management Policy for Business Emails

Introduction

Email is routinely used by the Council for both formal and informal purposes. The Council's *Records Management Policy for Business Emails* will help to ensure that records created when Council business is conducted by email are managed efficiently, effectively and economically and in line with the Council's broader *Records Management Policy*.

In order to manage business records in email format effectively it is essential that key underlying systems and protocols are embedded. This includes:

- Clearing out time-expired emails.
- Organising current business records in email format so that they are clearly identified, held in well-structured folders and accessible to the Council, not just an individual.
- Training staff in good email management practice.

In order to effect the culture change needed to put in place good email management practices, the Council needs to implement processes gradually and appropriately.

Scope

This policy aims to meet the requirements of good records management and therefore applies to all business records in email format created and received by the Council.

Policy

The Council's *Records Management Policy for Business Emails* is:

To encourage the controlled use of email and the use of alternative forms of communication where more appropriate.

To ensure that where business is conducted by email, those emails are created and maintained as records.

In other words, to make sure that information needed to fulfil legal obligations and reconstruct activities and transactions that have taken place is recorded. Normal business practice is to store and access emails electronically for the duration of their lifetime, but there may be limited instances where it is appropriate or advisable, to print emails out.

To ensure that records in email format can be accessed by the Council.

In other words, to make sure that it is possible for the Council (not just an individual) to quickly and easily locate and access business emails.

To ensure that the content of business records created in email format is appropriate.

In other words, to make sure that the contents of business emails created are not illegal, malicious or offensive and do not put the Council's reputation at risk.

To ensure that business records in email format can be interpreted.

In other words, to make sure that a context for business emails can be established, showing when and by whom they were created or received, and how they relate to other information e.g. where an email constitutes an approval, it should be stored alongside information about what is being approved, if this is not evident in the email itself.

To ensure that business records in email format can be maintained.

In other words, to make sure that business emails are deemed to be present in the Council and can be accessed and interpreted for as long as necessary, including on transfer to other systems and technologies or on transfer to the Council Archives.

To ensure that business records in email format are disposed of in accordance with the Council Records Retention Schedule.