

Records Management Policy

Version history

Version	Date Adopted	Facilitator	Note
1.0			

Document controls

Action	Responsibility
Approval of document	Secretariat and Plenary
Implementation	Secretariat, Plenary, Staff and Supervisory Working Group, Members
Review	Secretariat
Date of next review	

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Records Management Policy is to set out how South Dublin County Public Participation Network (SDC PPN) creates, manages, stores, accesses and disposes of records in a consistent, secure and accountable way.

Effective records management supports good governance, transparency, accountability and compliance with legal and funding obligations.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all records created or received in the course of SDC PPN business, regardless of format or where they are held.

This includes:

- governance records
- financial and procurement records
- operational and administrative records
- membership and participation records
- correspondence and communications
- digital and paper records

This policy should be read alongside the Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Policy, which address the lawful processing and retention of personal data.

2. Principles of Records Management

Records management within SDC PPN is guided by the following principles:

- Good governance and accountability, ensuring records support transparent decision-making
- Accuracy and reliability, so records reflect what was decided or done
- Data minimisation, holding only what is necessary
- Secure handling, protecting records from unauthorised access, loss or misuse
- Accessibility, ensuring records can be retrieved when required by authorised persons
- Proportionality, applying controls appropriate to the scale and nature of the PPN

Records are managed to support the effective operation of the PPN while respecting confidentiality and data protection requirements.

3. Types of Records Covered

This policy applies to all SDC PPN records, including but not limited to:

- Governance records, such as agendas, minutes, decisions, policies and procedures
- Financial records, including budgets, invoices, payments, expense claims and financial reports
- Procurement records, including quotes, tenders and contracts
- Membership records, including applications, re-registration information and related correspondence
- Operational records, including work plans, reports and project documentation
- Communications, including emails and formal correspondence relating to PPN business
- Digital records, including files stored electronically
- Paper records, where applicable

4. Creation, Ownership and Responsibility

All records created or received in the course of SDC PPN business are PPN records, regardless of who creates or holds them.

This includes records created or held by:

- PPN staff
- Secretariat members
- PPN representatives
- facilitators or volunteers acting on behalf of the PPN

Records must be created, named and managed in a way that supports retrieval, accountability and continuity.

5. Storage, Access and Security

Records must be stored in approved systems and locations used by SDC PPN.

5.1 Storage

- Digital records are stored in approved electronic systems
- Paper records, where used, are stored securely

Personal devices or private storage systems should not be used to store official PPN records where approved systems are available.

5.2 Access

Access to records is:

- role-based, and
- restricted to those who need access for legitimate PPN purposes

5.3 Security

Appropriate technical and organisational measures are applied to protect records, including:

- password protection
- controlled access
- secure storage of paper records

Security measures are proportionate to the sensitivity of the records.

6. Retention and Disposal

Records are retained in line with the SDC PPN Data Retention Policy, which sets out retention periods for different categories of records.

6.1 Disposal

When records reach the end of their retention period, they are disposed of securely, including:

- secure deletion of electronic records
- shredding of paper records

Disposal is authorised and carried out in a controlled manner, and records of disposal may be maintained where appropriate.

7. Access, Confidentiality and Sharing

Records are treated as confidential unless there is a legitimate reason for access or sharing.

7.1 Confidentiality

All individuals involved in SDC PPN activity have a responsibility to respect the confidentiality of records they access.

7.2 Sharing of Records

Records may be shared where appropriate and lawful, including:

- with South Dublin County Council (SDCC)
- with the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
- with auditors or funders
- where required by law

Any sharing of records containing personal data is carried out in line with the Data Protection Policy and applicable legislation.

8. Review and Monitoring

Records management practices are monitored as part of ongoing PPN operations.

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it remains appropriate, effective and aligned with good governance practice.

9. Review and Amendments

This policy may be reviewed or updated:

- following changes in legislation or guidance
- where organisational practices change
- where experience indicates a need for improvement

Any amendments are approved in line with SDC PPN governance procedures.