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Paradigm Records Survey

Dear Paradigm participant,

Prior to the first visit of the project staff it might be useful for you to think about what digital and paper records are routinely created in your constituency office. We appreciate that you are very busy and therefore this is by no means compulsory. Rather these questions should be seen as a prompt sheet, encouraging you to think about the ways in which records are created, used and stored in your office.

It might be useful to clarify what we mean by a 'record'. A record is that which is created and kept as evidence of individual functions, activities and transactions. It can be in any format whether paper, photographic material, audio tape, maps, or increasingly, in the form of a digital file or object. To be considered evidence a record must possess content, structure and context and be part of a record-keeping system. The PARADIGM project is particularly looking at procedures for acquiring, managing and preserving records which are in a digital format.

Who creates the records?

How many members of staff are employed? What are their key roles?

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Does the MP create their own digital or paper records?

Record locations: where do you keep paper and digital records?

Where do staff store their digital and/or paper files?

Are records also created at a London office at the House of Commons/Lords?

Are records duplicated elsewhere?

How many members of staff are employed at a London office? What are their key roles?

Does the MP have further digital records at their home in the constituency?

Record Types

What types of digital records are used in this office (eg. Word, Powerpoint, spreadsheets, databases, webpages, jpegs, pdf etc)

Are records created in both paper and digital formats? Are some in both formats? If so which is the master?

Record Keeping systems: how are records maintained and managed through time

Are records kept centrally on a server or does each member of staff manage their own records?

Web pages: how often are the constituency web pages updated? Are copies of previous versions kept? Who is in charge of the website? Does the Labour Party have any preservation policies? Does the Labour Party advise on templates and layout?

Email: how are personal emails organised? Eg moved into email folders, saved to Microsoft Office folders? Saved to personal folders?

Word files: how are these organised

What kinds of paper records are created? Are any documents purely in paper format? Eg diaries, address books, press cuttings etc?

Can you provide a list of key records created (all formats)?

Are there any guidelines or rules to help manage the creation of records? Version control?

Are there file plans/ file classification schemes

Document naming – how are documents named? Are they filed digitally in named folders?

What happens to non-current records?

Privacy

Are some records of a sensitive nature? (eg under Data Protection Act)

Copyright/ Intellectual Property

Who owns the copyright of records held at the constituency office? For example, do you have image files from freelance photographers? – if so can copyright be traced?

Technical

Hardware (Are the office computers networked, stand alone or laptops)?

What kind of operating systems are used?

What is the main software used for records creation?

Does your office use any unusual software?

Do computers have USB ports or CD writers

What technical support do you have?

Who is responsible for IT?