**Ability Shetland Handling of Disclosure Scotland (PVG) certificate information**

**1.Scope and purpose**

**Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure Scotland PVG and certificate information:** The code of practice requires that all registered bodies must have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of PVG certificate information. It also obliges registered bodies to ensure that a body or individual, on whose behalf they are countersigning applications, has a written policy.

**2.General principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure Scotland (PVG) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, **Ability Shetland** complies fully with the Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

**3. Storage and access**

The majority of the disclosures issued will be sent to the organisation by email and only those disclosures that Disclosure Scotland need to print will be passed to the organisation either by post or by telephone results. Telephone results are only available for organisations who are not able to receive or securely store paper certificates.

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

**4.Handling**

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

To note: those registered care homes which are inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Care Inspectorate Scotland, those organisations which are inspected by Ofsted and those establishments which are inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) may retain the certificate until the next inspection. Once the inspection has taken place the certificate should be destroyed in accordance with the Code of Practice. Handling of DBS certificate information, December 2012.

**5.Usage**

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant’s full consent has been given.

**6.Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, we will consult the Disclosure Scotland about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

**7.Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any PVG certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.