



# **Corporate Records Management** **Policy**

## 1 Version History details and author

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2.0	26/05/2011	Reviewed and approved by Information Governance Group. Revamped from original document.	David Jenkins
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13.0	02/08/2022	Revisions drawing on suggestions from Audit Services. Introduction notes benefits of openness, scope aligned with Information Asset Management Policy, objectives refreshed, key concepts expanded, Appendix A replaced by cross-reference to applicable legislation register, Appendix B re-labelled.	Mark Smith / Philip Spencer
14.0	06/09/2023	Reviewed by Information Governance Group. Agency staff added.	Mark Smith
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### **This document has been prepared using the following ISO27001:2022 standard controls as reference:**

A 5.10-Acceptable use of information and other associated Assets  
 A.5.12-13-Classification and Labelling of Information  
 A.5.31-Legal, statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements  
 A.5.33-Protection of records  
 A.5.34-Privacy and protection of PII  
 A.6.3-Information security awareness, education and training  
 A.7.10-Storage Media

## **2 Introduction**

Derbyshire County Council is dependent on its records to maintain normal business operations, enable compliance with current legislation, and to support accountability for the actions of the Council and its staff. This policy defines a structure within which the Council can ensure that its records are managed effectively in accordance with its legal, operational and evidential needs.

The Council recognises that records are collective assets. They comprise the Council's corporate memory of its policies, services and decision-making processes and reflect its business requirements. Compliance with this policy will help the Council produce reliable evidence, demonstrate accountability, defend potential claims, and provide information about the Council's decisions and activities for as long as is required for operational efficiency. According to research undertaken for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), greater openness benefits not only citizens but also government itself, by prompting better record management, making decisions and services more efficient and serving as a safeguard against misgovernment and corruption

Issues relating to management of records are critical to the ongoing business and legislative obligations of the Council. Specifically, The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Records Management Code) requires evidence that comprehensive records management arrangements are in place, so that each public authority keeps information in accordance with its needs.

This policy will help support the Council's aim to achieve high performing services , by setting an effective framework for the retrieval, management, and disposal of records and information in paper and electronic formats.

## **3 Policy Statement**

The Council is committed to the efficient management of its records for the effective delivery of public services, to document its principal activities and to maintain the corporate memory. Records require proper management throughout their life from creation to disposal. This will be encouraged by use of the Information Security Management System as a procedural framework to ensure authenticity, reliability and accessibility in respect to the management of key information. Continuous review of the policies, procedures and guidance contained in the system will be informed by ISO 15489 (the international standard on records management), the Records Management Code and examples of best practice.

## **4 Scope**

The scope of this policy extends to all Council departments, employees, agency staff, elected members, third parties, vendors and partner agencies who utilise or who are responsible for the development, management and maintenance of all Council information assets. These include all paper-based records as well as those that exist solely in electronic form.

## **5 Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the Council

- keeps records securely while allowing quick and efficient retrieval of information, supporting business resilience
- keeps records for as long as is necessary to comply with its business needs and all legal, administrative and financial requirements
- manages its records to appropriate standards
- ensures its records are properly titled, referenced, indexed and marked with a security classification. All records are maintained according to an agreed corporate file plan
- disposes of time-expired records to minimise costs and manage storage space efficiently
- reduces risk of litigation, audit and government investigations
- complies with legal and regulatory requirements, including those listed in the applicable legislation register

## 6 Key Concepts

### 6.1 Information

Information is data that is organised and contextualised so that it can be understood.

### 6.2 Documents

A document is a self-contained unit of information. It may be understood on its own or through use of other information sources. Practices which govern the proper management of documents may apply equally well to any data. For instance, a row in a relational database table may be regarded as a manageable unit, relating to a single transaction which can be understood independently.

### 6.3 Records

Records are defined as “Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organisation or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business” (ISO 15489-1).

The Records Management Code leaves it to each authority to decide on the value of its information and the purpose of holding it. The Council acknowledges its responsibility to manage the information it regards as assets (see the Information Asset Management Policy) and to maintain the evidential value of those assets which it regards as records.

For information to be adequately maintained as a record, it must be captured in a recordkeeping system, paper-based or electronic. A recordkeeping system may be defined as any system which maintains the authenticity, reliability, integrity and usability of the information it holds.

### 6.4 The record lifecycle

Following capture as a record, information goes through three phases:

- **Current:** Current Records are evidence of the functions and activities of the Council and will be used on a frequent basis for the conduct of current business. These may be in the form of active client files, active correspondence (paper and email), reports etc.
- **Semi-Current:** Semi Current Records are evidence of the functions and activities of the Council and will require continued retention but are not used on a daily basis. These may include inactive client files for individuals who are no longer in contact with the Council, financial records, reports and policies. These records will typically be inactive and retained for compliance purposes.

- **Disposal:** Non Current Records are no longer required either for the conduct of current business or for compliance reasons and should be disposed of.

### 6.5 Disposal

Disposal as defined in the Record Disposal Policy, is the physical destruction of a non-current record or its transfer to another body or an archive repository for permanent retention. Records suitable for permanent retention include minutes of the County Council, audited annual accounts and title deeds to Council property. These permanent records are a minority of the records created by the Council. For records to be classed as permanent records they will:

- be needed for as long as the Council is in existence
- be required to satisfy a permanent legal requirement, or
- be part of the Council's historical archives held at the Derbyshire Record Office

To comply with access to information legislation and the Records Management Code the Council has an obligation to maintain agreed procedures for the disposal of its records. The core principle is to dispose of records which no longer serve an operational purpose or are not required for a legislative reason. Corporate guidance on records management is available at the following link: [corporate records management](#) or by emailing [records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:records.management@derbyshire.gov.uk).

Each department/section should have a records retention schedule/policy giving the appropriate retention periods for its records. These retention periods should be based on legislative requirements and common practice within the sector. Records retention schedules should be regularly reviewed (at a minimum every two years). Departmental retention schedules can be obtained by consulting the following link: [retention schedules](#)

#### Records storage:

The storage of records should reflect the value and importance of the information they contain. Records must be held in appropriate storage conditions, protecting them from damage or deterioration (e.g. in damp conditions). Records classified as controlled or restricted must be held securely, with access to authorised staff only, to reduce the likelihood of damage or loss of records. Records may be stored off council premises via the Council's off-site document storage contract, subject to the corporate guidance for this service.

Electronic records require the same level of care in their storage and maintenance as paper records and therefore should not be stored on individual PCs, laptops or other IT devices. Where a dedicated case management system (e.g. Mosaic) has been adopted, it should be used to capture all appropriate information. The Council's corporate electronic document and records management system (EDRM) is suitable for most other Council records. Where neither a case management system nor the EDRM is in use, a shared network drive with appropriate access controls should be used.

### 6.6 Transient data

Transient data is of short-term transactional value only. It includes data held within electronic systems that has no beginning, middle or end state. It also includes hard copy information such as short-term notes. Council staff may use notepads and diaries as an aide memoire to facilitate capture of information in a recordkeeping system such as Mosaic. The Council does not regard these notepads or diaries as a record unless captured in a system and disposed of according to the Council's

retention schedules. In all cases transient data should be managed securely as it may include sensitive, personal or confidential information.

## **7 Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Caldicott Guardian:**

The role of Caldicott Guardian originated in the National Health Service after the 1997 publication of Dame Fiona Caldicott's report into the handling of patient-identifiable information, before being introduced into local authority social care in 2002. Derbyshire County Council's Caldicott Guardian is responsible for:

- acting as the conscience of the organisation, ensuring that legal and ethical considerations are taken into account in the sharing of confidential information.
- promoting appropriate organisational culture, to encourage excellence in information governance
- arbitrating in cases of disagreement about processes impacting on confidentiality

### **7.2 Information Risk Owners:**

The Information Governance Group (IGG) co-ordinates the management of information assets through Information Risk Owners (IROs) and their appointed information asset owners (IAOs). The IGG is chaired by the lead officer on delivering risk management and security strategy in the Council, who is designated the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

### **7.3 The SIRO is responsible for:**

- overseeing the information security and governance function
- overseeing incident management and risk management
- overseeing security management and reporting, including maintenance of the ISO27001 standard

### **7.4 Other IROs and IAOs are responsible for:**

- the routine management, review and treatment of risks to the Council's information assets
- undertaking quarterly reviews of information risk assessments, in line with the requirements set out in ISO27001.

For more on the duties of IROs and IAOs, see the Information Asset Management Policy.

### **7.5 Elected Members**

Elected Members are responsible for ensuring that:

- records management is recognised as a mandatory corporate function within Derbyshire County Council
- records management receives the necessary levels of organisational support and resources required to ensure effectiveness

### **7.6 Department/Service/Section Heads**

Department/Service/Section Heads are responsible for ensuring that:

- agreed Corporate Records Management policies, procedures and retention schedules are implemented and adhered to within their areas
- appropriate staff are designated to assist with the implementation of records management policies and procedures and liaise with the Corporate Records Manager

- staff are supported in terms of training and development to enable them to carry out records management duties largely through attendance at corporate records management training events held by the Derbyshire Record Office
- they provide authorisation for the disposal of records which is carried out in accordance with agreed policies

### **7.7 Data Protection Officer**

The Council appoints a Data Protection Officer (DPO) in accordance with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The DPO is accountable to the Council via the Corporate Management Team to:

- inform and advise the organisation and its employees about their obligations to comply with the UK GDPR and other data protection laws
- monitor compliance with the UK GDPR and other data protection laws
- be the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed.

### **7.8 Archives and Local Studies Manager**

The Archives and Local Studies Manager is responsible for ensuring that

- appropriate advice and guidance is given to Elected Members and Senior Officers to establish and maintain a corporate framework for the management and preservation of records in all formats across the Council
- professional standards for records management, archive management and preservation are met and compliance with records management policies and procedures are regularly reviewed
- records management strategies are developed, evaluated and revised, and advice on standards is provided
- the Corporate Records Manager is supported in their work in terms of supervision, learning and development and resources
- records identified for permanent preservation are transferred as appropriate to the Derbyshire Record Office
- Derbyshire Record Office continues to preserve and manage the historic records of Derbyshire County Council, and meets relevant national and international standards (BS4971:2017, ISO 15489 and Archive Service Accreditation)

### **7.9 Corporate Records Manager**

The Corporate Records Manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- an effective and efficient records management programme is developed and implemented for records, regardless of their format, to enable the Council to meet its record keeping obligations
- sufficient advice and guidance is given to officers with records management responsibilities across the Council to achieve implementation of records management policies
- support and guidance is given towards the implementation and development to appropriate standards of a corporate Electronic Document and Records Management System
- records management guidance notes and procedures are developed and disseminated
- staff are trained in records management best practice and how to implement corporate records management policies and procedures
- the off-site document storage contract is coordinated effectively including the regular review of the operation of the contract
- the implementation of records management policies and procedures is monitored, evaluated and reported

#### **7.10 Individual Employees**

Individual Employees are responsible for ensuring that:

- actions and decisions taken in the course of Council business are properly documented and recorded
- The Corporate Records Management policy is followed consistently with the support of the Corporate Records Manager
- Records are identified for disposal in accordance with agreed policies and retention schedules
- Disposal procedures are implemented consistently

### **8 Policy Monitoring and Review**

Compliance with this policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the Corporate Records Manager and the Archives and Local Studies Manager in consultation with the Information Implementation Group.

A review of this policy will take place at least every two years to take account of any new or changed legislation, regulations or business practices.

***This document is owned by the Information Governance Group and forms part of the Council's ISMS Policy and as such, must be fully complied with.***



## **Appendix A**

### **Partnership working**

Derbyshire County Council carries out many projects and services in conjunction with partners. Derbyshire County Council therefore has a responsibility to ensure that the records of these partnership initiatives are properly managed.

This policy is intended to eliminate unnecessary duplication of records across stakeholders, but not at the expense of operational efficiency. Information sharing amongst partners and stakeholders is a key issue for effective delivery of services. Appropriate protocols and procedures for record creation and management must be developed which demonstrate compliance with central government advice, as well as with local policies and priorities.

Core records which need to be kept permanently should be identified and one partner made responsible for management and long-term preservation.

### **General Principles**

Where Derbyshire County Council is the lead partner:

- The core records will be retained and managed by the Council.
- Retention schedules for the records will be drawn up and applied to records created.
- The Council's Corporate Records Management policy and procedures will apply.

Where another organisation is the lead partner

- The core records will be retained by the lead organisation.
- Derbyshire County Council should identify and manage the records relating to its role in the partnership. Many of these records will be operational and will therefore only need to be kept for a time-limited period.

Where no single organisation is the lead partner

- Derbyshire County Council should ensure that provisions are made for one partner, whether this is the Council or another partner, to be responsible for management of the core records.
- If Derbyshire County Council is nominated to manage the partnership's records, then the Council's Corporate Records Management policy and procedures will apply.

Those operational records created during the partnership which facilitate the service/function of the partnership in respect of individual partners should be managed by each partner and have retention periods applied that reflect each partner's specific requirements.

Derbyshire County Council should, in all instances, recommend to its partners that an appropriate file plan is put in place and that consistent metadata standards, version control and file titling procedures are implemented to ensure that the records can be managed effectively and to agreed standards across the partnership.