

Records Management Policy

Implementation date: 04 October 2016

Control schedule

Approved by	Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee
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Senior Responsible Officer	Kevin Wilbraham, Information Governance Manager
Author	Henry Sullivan, Information Asset Manager
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Version control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
1.0	30-09-2014	Henry Sullivan	Version approved by Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee as part of Information Governance Policy Suite
1.1	18-01-2016	Henry Sullivan	Updates for ICO Audit – first draft
1.2	06-07-2016	Henry Sullivan	Updates post Transformation
1.3	25-08-2016	Henry Sullivan	Updated template and link to Data Quality
1.4	03-09-2016	Henry Sullivan	Draft version agreed with Head of Strategy (interim)
2.0	04-10-2016	Kevin Wilbraham	Agreed by CP&S

Committee decisions affecting this policy

Date	Committee	Link to report	Link to minute
30-09-2014	Corporate Policy & Strategy	Information Governance Policies	Minute
04-10-2016	Corporate Policy & Strategy	Information Governance Policies	Minute

Records Management Policy

Policy statement

- 1.1 Council records are sources of administrative, evidential and historical information necessary for the effective functioning and accountability of the Council. Over time they also will provide valuable evidence and understanding of the communities it serves.
- 1.2 In order for the value of Council records to be maintained and assured, they need to be managed efficiently, transparently and consistently throughout their life-cycle; from the point they are created or received, through maintenance and use, to the time they are destroyed or permanently preserved as archival records.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the Council's responsibilities and activities in regard to this records management. It governs the management of all records created or acquired on the Council's behalf in the course of Council business.
- 1.4 This policy:
 - 1.4.1 provides the baseline requirements for good records management within the Council to ensure records are created, managed and used effectively and efficiently;
 - 1.4.2 supports the Council in complying with its statutory and regulatory obligations as well as its commitments as set out in its Information Governance Policy;
 - 1.4.3 defines records management responsibilities throughout the Council;
 - 1.4.4 underpins a working culture which acknowledges the value and benefits of accurate record creation and effective management; and
 - 1.4.5 encourages a leaner Council that retains records for only as long as required for business purposes.

Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
 - 2.1.1 All records which are created received and managed in the course of City of Edinburgh Council ('the Council') business ('Council records').
 - 2.1.2 All permanent and temporary Council employees, volunteers, people on work placements and elected members when acting as officers of the Council
 - 2.1.3 All third parties and contractors performing a statutory Council function or service

Definitions

- 3.1 **Archives:** are the records which are retained permanently because of their continuing business, evidential or informational value to the Council or communities it serves.
- 3.2 **Business Unit:** is a term used for teams and sections below that of the Service Area within the Council reporting structure
- 3.3 **Council Records:** are defined as;
 - 3.3.1 recorded information in any format (including paper, microform, electronic and audio-visual formats); and
 - 3.3.2 which are created, collected, processed, and/or used by City of Edinburgh Council employees, Elected Members when undertaking Council business, predecessor bodies (e.g. Lothian Region Council, Edinburgh District Council, Edinburgh Corporation) or contractors performing a statutory Council function or service.
 - 3.3.3 and which are then kept as evidence of that business.
- 3.4 **Data:** the raw input from which information of value is derived.
- 3.5 **File Plan** is a governance tool that classifies Council records in terms of Council function and activity; it acts as the baseline to connect this policy, and its related guidance and procedures, to the business processes that create, manage, use and dispose of Council records.
- 3.6 **Format** is the medium in which records are created from; most electronic formats are capable of being edited and changed continually (e.g. MS Word), 'fixed formats' do not allow this (e.g. PDF).
- 3.7 **Information asset owners:** senior officers involved in managing a business area(s) with responsibility for the information assets within their respective business area(s).
- 3.8 The **Information asset register** is a governance tool that lists the Council's key information assets.
- 3.9 **Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011:** requires public authorities to detail their records management policies, procedures and responsibilities in a Records Management Plan, which is subject to review by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.
- 3.10 **Records management:** are the processes and practices that ensure Council records are systematically controlled and maintained, covering the creation, storage, management, access, and disposal of records, in compliance with best practice, statutory requirements and policy obligations.
- 3.11 **Records management manual** – a document that details how records are created, maintained and disposed of within a business unit, service area, project or working group.

- 3.12 **Recordkeeping systems:** are physical filing systems or IT business systems that hold and manage Council records.
- 3.13 **Record Retention Rules:** identify when closed records or files can be disposed of and what should happen to them at that point. They can be broken down into four parts;
- 3.13.1 Activity / Record Description – provides the context on what is covered by the retention rule.
- 3.13.2 Trigger – indicates the moment that the retention period starts applying; usually around the event or date that “closes” a record.
- 3.13.3 Retention Period – how long you hold onto a record beyond the trigger point.
- 3.13.4 Disposal Action – the action required once a record has reached the end of its retention period.
- 3.14 **Vital records:** are records classified as being essential to the continuation of Council business.

Policy content

- 4.1 To ensure effective management, it is essential that the following policy requirements are understood and applied consistently by all Council employees and services.

Creation

- 4.1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council is the owner of all Council records, including those created by Elected Members, contractors or consultants.
- 4.1.2 Council records must be accurate, authoritative and comprehensive in content in order to provide reliable evidence of Council business.
- 4.1.3 Council records must be adequate for the Council business they support and based on good quality data, in accordance with the Council’s Data Quality Policy.
- 4.1.4 Council records must be titled and referenced in a manner consistent and relevant to the business activity to ensure that they can be easily retrieved, understood and managed.
- 4.1.5 Council records should be created in fixed formats where ever possible.

Storage

- 4.1.6 Council records must be adequately protected and stored securely to prevent unauthorised access.
- 4.1.7 Electronic Council records must be stored on the Council’s network in folder structures that conform to the Council’s File Plan, or in valid electronic record keeping systems.

- 4.1.8 Physical Council records no longer needed for immediate or routine use should be sent to the Council's Records Centre for storage and management.
- 4.1.9 Council records must always be retrievable for business, performance, audit and public rights of access purposes up until they are destroyed.

Management

- 4.1.10 Council records must have access controls and audit logging in place that are appropriate to the sensitivity and risk of their content.
- 4.1.11 Council records must remain accessible and usable for as long as they are required to be retained under the Council's Retention Schedule.
- 4.1.12 Council records that are vital to the continuity of Council business must be identified as Vital Records by the business units that hold them.
- 4.1.13 Council records must not be distributed or copied unnecessarily.

Disposal

- 4.1.14 No Council record may be destroyed without appropriate authorisation and due regard to both legal obligations and the Council's Retention Schedule.
- 4.1.15 All destructions of Council records must be logged by the disposing business unit. This log must be kept for no less than 20 years on a rolling basis.
- 4.1.16 Council records must be destroyed securely, in compliance with the Council procedures.

Transfer to Archive

- 4.2 Council records identified as having enduring evidential or historical value are to be transferred to the professional care of Edinburgh City Archives for permanent preservation after they have ceased to be of business use.
- 4.3 Records from the Council's predecessors (e.g. Edinburgh District Council, Edinburgh Corporation, civil parishes etc.) must also be transferred to Edinburgh City Archives.
- 4.4 Council records in the care of Edinburgh City Archives will be stored, arranged, described, indexed and made accessible in accordance with professional archival standards and recommendations.

Records Management Manuals

- 4.5 Every Council business unit will have at least one Records Management manual that documents the administrative procedures around its business activities, dictating who, when and how records are to be created, stored, managed and disposed or transferred.
- 4.6 Records management manuals must be developed locally within the Council services they cover but they should be approved by a relevant working group, or

management team as complying with Council policies, regulatory guidance and statutory requirements.

- 4.7 Managers will routinely review their records management manuals and these will also be subject to corporate assessment and audit.
- 4.8 As part of contract due diligence and monitoring, third parties and contractors may be asked to provide similar documentation for their own administrative procedures around the Council records they will create or receive and then manage.

Public Records (Scotland) Act, 2011 – Records Management Plan

- 4.9 The Council has a Records Management Plan approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (see the published version on the Council's website) and commits to annually reviewing it, as per statutory requirements set out in the Public Records Scotland Act, 2011.
- 4.10 The Chief Executive of the Council is the senior officer responsible for the Plan. The Information Asset Manager is the Council officer operationally responsible for the Plan.
- 4.11 The Records Management Plan is maintained and reported on by the Council's Information Governance Unit in conjunction with other relevant officers and overseen by the Information Council.
- 4.12 An update of changes and improvements to the Council's records management arrangements under the Plan will be made annually by the Council to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.
- 4.13 Each new Records Management Plan requested by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland will be approved by the Council Leadership Team and signed off by the Chief Executive before being submitted for the Keeper's approval.

Implementation

- 5.1 This policy will be implemented through the Information Council's annual plan.
- 5.2 The initial key measurement of success will be the development and maintenance of records management manuals across the Council but other success measurements will be;
 - 5.2.1 the ongoing management and consistent use by staff of the Council's Retention Schedule
 - 5.2.2 the development, approval and maintenance of the Council's File Plan
 - 5.2.3 the approval of the Council's Records Management Plan by the Keeper of the Public Records of Scotland

- 5.2.4 the development and roll out of records management training by the Information Governance Unit for staff
- 5.2.5 Roll out of the Council's Enterprise Content Management solution
- 5.3 The Information Governance Unit will conduct rolling and periodic reviews of records management manuals and compliance with this Policy within service areas. Results of these assessments will be provided to the relevant Directorate Records Officer and to the Information Council, when and where required.

Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1 The Information Governance Policy provides a detailed explanation concerning overall roles and responsibilities around information governance. This section provides a summary of those responsibilities, but also outlines specific responsibilities in relation to managing Council records.
- 6.2 The **Chief Executive** has overall executive responsibility for the Council's records policy and for supporting its application throughout the organisation. The Chief Executive is also the senior officer responsible for the management of the City of Edinburgh Council's records under section 1(2a) of the Public Records (Scotland) Act, 2011.
- 6.3 **Directors** have a general responsibility to ensure that records within their Directorate are managed according to statutory responsibilities and Council policies. They must do this by ensuring that;
 - 6.3.1 there are up to date, authorised, comprehensive and relevant record retention rules for their directorate within the Council's Retention Schedule
 - 6.3.2 records management manuals are issued and reviewed within their service areas
 - 6.3.3 they have at least one officer fulfilling the role of a Directorate Records Officer
 - 6.3.4 ensuring contracts with third parties performing a public function contain appropriate clauses on expected records management behaviour
- 6.4 The **Head of Strategy and Insight** as the **Senior Information Risk Owner** (SIRO) has the delegated responsibility to authorise, in conjunction with each Director, record retention rules that define how long records should be retained and what should happen to them subsequently. The Information Governance Manager is the Deputy SIRO and will act on the SIRO's behalf as and when required.
- 6.5 All **Managers** must;
 - 6.5.1 ensure that this policy and any associated records management procedures and guidance are understood by all staff within their business units and that these are incorporated in routine administrative practices

- 6.5.2 ensure that all administrative practices of their business units are comprehensively documented and maintained within records management manuals
- 6.5.3 ensure that records under their management are retained and disposed of according to the Council's record retention rules – irrespective of format (e.g. electronic / paper) or location (e.g. local storage or at the Records Centre)
- 6.5.4 maintain a disposal log of all Council records that have been destroyed within their business units on a rolling 20 year basis
- 6.5.5 identify those Council records that are vital to the continuation of Council business and detail them within the Council's business continuity arrangements and their own local records management manuals
- 6.5.6 consult the Information Governance Unit and their Directorate Records Officer when changes to the Council's record retention rules or File Plan are needed to be made
- 6.5.7 ensure that records sent to the Council's Records Centre are appropriately listed, with relevant record retention rules given
- 6.5.8 identify and record any existing or emerging risks around Council records on local, divisional and directorate risk registers
- 6.6 **Employees** must;
 - 6.6.1 read, understand and follow this policy and any associated records management procedures and guidance that are relevant to their work
 - 6.6.2 read, understand and follow any records management manuals that are relevant to their work
 - 6.6.3 Identify and report any risks to Council records to their line manager
- 6.7 **Elected Members** have the same responsibility to manage and dispose of records created in their role as representatives of the Council according to relevant policies and procedures.
- 6.8 **Third parties (e.g. contractors, voluntary and not for profit organisations) performing a public function for the City of Edinburgh Council** must also adhere to the requirements set out in this policy and have their own administrative practices documented and assessed in similar ways to Council business units as part of the tendering and contract monitoring processes. To do this they must allow access by relevant Council staff to any Council records they create, receive or manage, including any records keeping system they may hold them in.
- 6.9 **Directorate Records Officers** will;
 - 6.9.1 have delegated authority to take action and make decisions on records management issues within their directorate.

- 6.9.2 monitor the administrative practices and records management manuals of their directorate, as well as the record retention rules that fall within their Directorate.
- 6.9.3 monitor and authorise records management arrangements within relevant contracts of their directorate.
- 6.9.4 act as a liaison with the Information Governance Unit on records related projects and issues.
- 6.10 The **Council Information Asset Manager** is part of the **Information Governance Unit** within the Strategy and Insight division of the Chief Executive's Office. The position has responsibility for the day to day operation and delivery of the Council's Records Management Plan. In relation to records management this officer will;
 - 6.10.1 provide professional guidance, advice and support on the management of Council records for all Council directorates;
 - 6.10.2 create, maintain and renew training modules and toolkits as appropriate;
 - 6.10.3 provide assurance by review of records management manuals;
 - 6.10.4 develop and maintain the Council's File Plan;
 - 6.10.5 maintain and review the Council's Retention Schedule;
 - 6.10.6 oversee the running of the Council's Records Centre;
 - 6.10.7 support and contribute to information governance assessments around Council records.
- 6.11 **Edinburgh City Archives** is specifically designated the place of deposit for Council records required for permanent preservation, whether for business or cultural purposes. It is responsible for preserving, promoting and making accessible these records, and other historical records that may be acquired by the Council.
- 6.12 **ICT Solutions** has a role to support the assessment of existing Council recordkeeping systems against this policy as well as helping to ensure that records management requirements are properly considered as part of the ICT procurement process.

Related documents

Council Policy

- 7.1 Archives Policy
- 7.2 Data Quality Policy
- 7.3 ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- 7.4 Information Governance Policy
- 7.5 Information Rights Policy

- 7.6 Managing Personal Data Policy
- 7.7 Re-use of Public Sector Information Policy

Codes, Guidance, Procedures and Strategy

- 7.8 [Code of Practice on Records Management issued under Section 61 of the Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act, 2002](#)
- 7.9 Council Archives Transfer Procedure
- 7.10 Council Records Retention Procedure
- 7.11 Employee Code of Conduct
- 7.12 Open Data Strategy
- 7.13 Records Management Manual guidance and workbook

Legislation

- 7.10 [Public Records Scotland Act, 2011](#)

Standards

- 7.11 *ISO 30300 and 30301 – Management Systems for Records*; establishes a model of best practice and assessment for records management within organisations, covering; policy development, statutory and regulatory awareness, responsibilities, process design and performance measuring.
- 7.12 *ISO 15489:2001 – Information and documentation; Records management*; sets out standard terminology, concepts and requirements for records management

Equalities impact

- 8.1 There are no equalities issues arising from this policy.

Sustainability impact

- 9.1 There are no sustainability issues arising from this policy.

Risk assessment

- 10.1 Risk of reputational damage and audit complications as a result of non-compliance with the Public Records (Scotland) Act, 2011 and the Council's own Records Management Plan.
- 10.2 Risk of monetary penalties and reputational damage through limited capability to identify and address statutory non-compliance with the Data Protection Act,

1998; specifically Principles 3 (Adequate, relevant and not excessive), 4 (Accurate and maintained), 5 (Over retention) and 7 (Unauthorised access and processing).

- 10.3 Risk of civil and criminal penalties as a result of a failure to identify and address non-compliance with other legislation that have requirements around records including, but not limited to, education, employment, finance, governance, health and safety and social care.
- 10.4 Risk of civil and criminal penalties as well as reputational damage and business continuity issues through poor decision making and accountability based on inadequate and poorly managed Council records.
- 10.5 Risk of weak internal governance and audit complications through a failure to raise and maintain the awareness of Council staff of records management requirements, best practice and standards.
- 10.6 Risk of excessive physical and IT storage costs through a failure to identify and apply appropriate retention rules to Council records.
- 10.7 Risk to citizens and clients that the Council will mismanage their service provision due to inadequate and poorly managed Council records.

Review

- 11.1 In line with the Council's Policy Framework, this policy will be reviewed annually or when required by significant changes to the Council's Records Management Plan or with legislation, regulation or business practice.