

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Document Control

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1.0 General

- 1.1 The Assessor, on behalf of Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board (The Board), carries out the functions of valuation of Non-Domestic properties for the purposes of the Valuation Roll; the banding of dwellings for the purposes of the Council Tax List and Electoral Registration for the three constituent local authorities.
- 1.2 This policy statement sets out an overview of how the Assessor intends to manage the records created and held in the course of carrying out these functions.
- 1.3 The Board recognises that the effective management of its records, regardless of format, is essential in order to support its core functions, to comply with legal, statutory and regulatory obligations, and to demonstrate transparency and accountability to all its stakeholders. Records are a vital information asset and a valuable resource for the organisation's decision-making processes, policy creation and operations, and must be managed effectively from the point of their creation until their ultimate disposal.
- 1.4 The Board is assisted in providing its functions by West Dunbartonshire Council, this assistance is managed via a Service Level Agreement (SLA). West Dunbartonshire Council have an approved Records Management Plan and records held by them on the Boards behalf are managed in line with this.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the importance of managing records effectively within the Board, to outline key aims and objectives in relation to recordkeeping, and to act as a mandate for the support and delivery of records management policies, procedures and initiatives across the Board.
- 2.2 This policy relates to all functional areas of the Board and all records created by its employees. It relates to the management of records as an internal, facilitating function of the organisation and covers the records created by the organisation, about its activities. It does not relate to the management of any former records that may have been transferred to an archive.
- 2.3 The policy relates to all staff. It applies to all records regardless of format or medium, including paper, electronic, audio or visual.

- 2.4 The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 places an obligation on named authorities in Scotland to produce and maintain a records management plan which sets out their arrangements for the effective management of all records. The Board is a named authority as defined in the Act. The creation and maintenance of a records management policy statement is a mandatory element of the plan, and is necessary in order to identify the procedures to be followed in managing the organisation's public records.

3. What is Records Management?

- 3.1 Records management can be defined as the process whereby an organisation manages its records, whether created internally or externally and in any format or media type, from their creation or receipt, through to their destruction or permanent preservation.
- 3.2 Records management is about placing controls around each stage of a record's lifecycle, at the point of creation (through the application of metadata¹, version control and naming conventions), during maintenance and use (through the management of security and access classifications, facilities for access and tracking of records), at regular review intervals (through the application of retention and disposal criteria), and ultimate disposal (whether this be recycling, confidential destruction or transfer to an archive for permanent preservation). By placing such controls around the lifecycle of a record, we can ensure they demonstrate the key attributes of authenticity, reliability, integrity and accessibility, both now and in the future.
- 3.3 Through the effective management of the organisation's records, the Board can provide a comprehensive and accurate account of its activities and transactions. This may be achieved through the management of effective metadata as well as the maintenance of audit trail data.
- 3.4 We retain records that provide evidence of our functions, activities and transactions, for:
- **Operational Use** – to serve the purpose for which they were originally created, to support our decision-making processes, to allow us to look back at decisions made previously and learn from previous successes and failure, and to protect the organisation's assets and rights.
 - **Internal & External Accountability** – to demonstrate transparency and accountability for all actions, to provide evidence of legislative, regulatory and statutory compliance and to demonstrate that all business is conducted in line with best practice.
 - **Historical and Cultural Value** – to protect and make available the corporate memory of the organisation to all stakeholders and for future generations.

4. Why is Records Management Important?

- 4.1 Information and records are valuable corporate assets without which we would be unable to carry out our functions, activities and transactions, meet the needs of our stakeholders, and ensure legislative compliance.
- 4.2 The benefits of implementing records management systems and processes include:

¹ Metadata can be defined in very general terms as 'data about data' and is necessary in order to understand the context, purpose, extent and location of a record. Examples of metadata can include information relating to a record's creator, creation date, receipt date, editor, access history and disposal.

- Improved information sharing and the provision of quick and easy access to the right information at the right time;
- The support and facilitation of more efficient service delivery;
- Improved business efficiency through reduced time spent searching for information;
- Demonstration of transparency and accountability for all actions;
- The maintenance of the corporate memory;
- The creation of better working environments and identification of opportunities for office rationalisation;
- Risk management in terms of ensuring and demonstrating compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory obligations;
- The meeting of stakeholder expectations through the provision of good quality services.
- Ensuring the practices and principles of records management are maintained by staff during periods of home working.

5. Policy Statement and Commitment

5.1 It is the policy of the Board to maintain reliable and useable records, which are capable of supporting business functions and activities for as long as they are required. This will be achieved through the consolidation and establishment of effective records management policies and procedures, including:

- The review of the Board's business classification scheme to reflect the functions, activities and transactions of the Board.
- The review of the retention and disposal schedule to provide clear guidance regarding the management of the Board records.
- The review and consolidation of destruction arrangements to detail the correct procedures to follow when disposing of business information.
- The production of archive transfer arrangements in order to provide advice and guidance on how to securely transfer records to the archive, if appropriate.
- The review and consolidation of information security policies and procedures in order to protect records and systems from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction.
- The review of data protection policies in order to demonstrate the Board's commitment to compliance with the Act and the safeguarding and fair processing of all personal data held.
- The review of the Board's business continuity plan, encompassing strategies to ensure that vital records held by the Board remain accessible over time and that there are processes in place to monitor the integrity and usability of records.
- The review of audit trail mechanisms, the potential of existing systems, and the gap which exists between current provision and best practice, in order to produce a clear strategy for improving the capture and management of key events in a record's lifecycle (e.g. creation, access, editing, destruction or preservation).
- The identification of records management as a distinct stream within the organisation's training portfolio, with requisite training provided to all staff.
- The completion of a self-assessment review, following the implementation of the records management plan in order to ensure that the records management practices remain fit for purpose.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 All staff have a responsibility to manage records effectively, through the documentation of all decisions and actions made by the Board; the effective maintenance of records throughout their

lifecycle, including access, tracking and storage of records; the timely review of records and their ultimate disposal, whether this be transfer to an archive for permanent preservation, or confidential destruction or recycling.

- 6.2 The lead responsible officer for records management in the Board is the Assessor. With the support of the Depute Assessor and the remainder of management team, he has responsibility for ensuring compliance with this records management policy.
- 6.3 The management team is responsible for approving a corporate approach to the management of records as defined within this policy, promoting a culture of excellent recordkeeping principles and practices in order to improve business efficiency, supporting records management through commitment and the provision of resources and recognising the importance of preserving the Board's corporate memory.
- 6.4 The Depute Assessor is responsible for offering advice and guidance regarding records management to all staff, highlighting any records management issues or concerns to the management team.
- 6.6 All staff are responsible for suitably maintaining all records so that they can be easily retrieved, retaining all records in line with the retention and disposal schedule, ensuring that all actions and decisions are properly recorded and adhere to this policy.
- 6.7 The Depute Assessor is responsible for ensuring that records management practices and procedures are established in line with all legal obligations and professional standards, issuing advice and guidance to all staff in order to meet the aims and objectives as outlined in the records management strategy.

7. Legislative Framework

- 7.1 The management of the Board's records is carried out in line with the following legislative, statutory and regulatory framework. Compliance with this policy will facilitate compliance with these acts, regulations and standards.
 - Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011
 - Equality Act 2010
 - UK Statistics Authority - Code of Practice for Official Statistics 2009
 - Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007
 - Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006
 - The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
 - Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Audit Commission Act 1998
 - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
 - Value Added Tax Act 1994
 - Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973
 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 - Taxes Management Act 1970
 - Public Records Act 1967
 - Registration of Births, Death and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965
 - Population (Statistics) Act 1960
 - Public Registers and Records (Scotland) Act 1948

- Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937
- Census Act 1920

7.2 The Board also aims to operate in accordance with the following best practice standards for recordkeeping:

- BS 10008:2008 - Evidential Weight and Legal Admissibility of Electronic Information
- BS ISO 27001: 2005 - Information Security
- BS ISO 15489: 2001 – Information & Documentation – Records Management (Parts 1 & 2)

8. Relationship to other Board Policies and Procedures

8.1 This policy forms part of the Board's overall framework but specifically relates to the following policies and procedures:

- Data Protection Policy
- Retention of Documents and Business Classification Scheme
- Business Continuity Plan & Disaster Recovery Plan
- Visitor Access Policy
- ICT Strategy
- Service Level Agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council
- WDC Corporate Information and Communication Technology Acceptable Use & Security Policy
- Core Training

9. Training

9.1 A training programme will be provided to all staff in order to ensure awareness of their responsibilities in line with data protection, freedom of information and records management. Furthermore, core competencies and key knowledge and skills required by staff with operational responsibility for records management are clearly defined to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities and can offer advice and guidance, to remain proactive in their management of recordkeeping issues and procedures within the Board.

10. Monitoring & Review

10.1 Compliance with this Policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the Depute Assessor. Regular reports will be submitted to the Management Team and updates will be disseminated to all staff when required.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years in order to take account of any new or changed legislation, regulations or business practices. Elements of the Plan that are subject to improvement plans will be reviewed more regularly to ensure that the improvement plans are implemented and are providing solutions that are fit for purpose.