

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.1 Introduction

Derbyshire County Council is dependent on its records to operate efficiently and to account for its actions. This policy defines a structure for Derbyshire County Council to ensure that records are maintained to meet these objectives and that they are managed and controlled effectively to recognised standards and commensurate with legal, operational and information governance needs.

Derbyshire County 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 records policy will ensure that the County Council can produce evidence and demonstrate accountability, in addition to providing information about the Council's decisions and activities for as long as is required for operational efficiency. The Council is committed to open government. Adherence to this policy will allow the Council to show that it is being open and honest in its activities.

Issues relating to management of records, whether in traditional paper or in electronic form, are critical to the ongoing business and legislative obligations of the County Council. Specifically, the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice under s. 46 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) requires evidence that comprehensive records management arrangements are in place.

This policy will support Derbyshire County Council's aim to "improve life for local people by delivering high quality services"

1.2 Records

Records can be defined as

"Recorded information, in any form, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or conduct of affairs and kept as evidence"

There are three basic types of records:

- **The Permanent Record.**

This will include series such as minutes of the County Council, audited annual accounts, title deeds to Council property, and much else.

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The key criteria for inclusion in this category are that the record

- will be needed for as long as the Authority has an existence and
 - is a permanent legal requirement and/or
 - becomes part of the Authority's historical archives in Derbyshire Record Office
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- **Transactional Information** is almost always contained within electronic systems and is information that has no beginning, middle or end state, although there is likely to be an audit trail of changes. It represents a first stage of data processing and is likely to be shown as processed information in a time-limited information flow. This in turn may be further processed and summarised as part of a permanent record
 - **Time-limited Information** has two phases. At first, it is current information which may be used on a daily or weekly basis. The second phase is when the information has to be maintained for legal or other reasons, but is rarely required for operational purposes. This is the information flow to which **retention and disposal periods** are to be applied.

2.1 Policy Statement

It is the policy of Derbyshire County Council that records require proper management throughout their life from creation to disposal. This will be achieved by establishing an appropriate procedural framework to ensure authenticity, reliability and accessibility. The framework will be based on BS ISO 15489 and The National Archives' Framework of Standards including standards for Records Management. The framework will be reviewed to reflect other appropriate standards as they are issued.

2.2 Scope

This policy relates to all departments, divisions, sections and services of Derbyshire County Council and all records created and received by Derbyshire County Council employees, regardless of media or format. This includes all paper-based records as well as records that exist, or will exist, solely in electronic form, audio/visual tapes and photographs. Emails are also covered under this policy.

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2.3

Objectives

To ensure that

- Derbyshire County Council has timely access to all relevant information and that records are kept only for as long as is necessary to comply with legal, administrative and financial requirements
- Derbyshire County Council records are managed effectively and efficiently to appropriate standards including ISO 15489:Records Management
- All records are properly titled, referenced, indexed and, where necessary, security marked. All records are maintained according to a agreed corporate file plan.
- Derbyshire County Council complies with all legislation and regulations concerning the proper management of records. This includes Freedom of Information (2000), Data Protection (1998), Public Records Acts (1958 & 1967), Environmental Information Regulations, and so on. (See Appendix A)

2.4 Responsibilities

2.4.1 Cabinet members

To ensure that

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

2.4.2 Department/Service/Section Heads

Responsible for ensuring that

- agreed Records Management policies and procedures are implemented within their department/service/section
- appropriate staff are designated to assist with the maintenance of Records Management policies and procedures
- staff are supported in terms of training and development to enable them to carry out Records Management duties
- authorisation for the disposal of records is carried out in accordance with agreed policies,
- retention schedules and procedures

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2.4.3 Individual Employees

Responsible for ensuring that

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

2.4.4 Derbyshire Record Office

Long-term management and preservation of the records of Derbyshire County Council is part of the remit of Derbyshire Record Office which is managed by the County Archivist. The Record Office provides professional expertise, develops policies, advises on standards and disseminates guidance on procedures for records management across the County Council.

2.4.5 County Archivist

Responsible for ensuring that

- Appropriate advice and guidance is given to Members and Senior Officers to establish and maintain a corporate framework for the management and preservation of records in all formats across the Authority
- Professional standards for records management and preservation are met, and compliance with Records Management policies and procedures is regularly reviewed
- Records Management strategies are developed, evaluated and revised, as appropriate
- As line manager for the Corporate Records Manager, the postholder is supported in his/her work in terms of supervision, learning and development and resources
- Records identified for permanent preservation are transferred as appropriate to Derbyshire Record Office
- Derbyshire Record Office continues to meet relevant national and international standards (BS5454, ISO 15489 and The National Archives' *Framework of Standards*)

2.4.6 Corporate Records Manager

Responsible for ensuring that

- An effective and efficient records management programme is developed and implemented for both hard copy and electronic records to enable the Council to meet its record keeping obligations

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- Sufficient advice and guidance is given to officers with Records Management responsibilities across the Authority 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:
 - These will include
 - Guidance on preservation of electronic data
 - Guidance on corporate and service-specific retention scheduling
 - Guidance on process mapping, a business classification scheme and corporate file plan
 - Guidance on file creation, maintenance and management
 - Procedures for the disposal of records
- Implementation of Records Management policies and procedures is monitored, evaluated and reported

2.5 Policy Monitoring and Review

Compliance with this policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the County Archivist and Corporate Records Manager in consultation with a nominated representative from each department through the Freedom of information working party.

As part of the monitoring and evaluation, an action plan for improvements in Records Management practices will be formulated every two years.

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

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Corporate Records Management Policy: Appendix A

Related Legislation, Standards and Policies

Legislation

- Freedom of Information Act 2000.
 - The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records Issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Environmental Information Regulations 1992
- Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
- Local Government Act 1972
- Public Record Acts 1958 & 1967

Professional Standards

- ISO 5454:2000 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents
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- ISO 15489 standard on best practice in records management
- ISO 7799 standard on Information security management
- DISC PD 0008: 1999 Code of practice for legal admissibility and evidential weight of information stored electronically
- DISC PD 0010: 1997 The Principles of good practice for information management

Internal Policy

- Corporate Information Management Strategy
- Best Value Performance Plan

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- Corporate Records Disposal Policy and Procedures
- Other Corporate Records Management Policies or Procedures

Professional Guidance

- The National Archives's Framework of Standards
- Retention Guidelines for Records of Local Authorities issued by the Records Management Society of Great Britain (2002)
- Local Government Classification Scheme v.2 issued by the Records Management Society of Great Britain

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Corporate Records Management Policy: Appendix B

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 Authority.
- Retention schedules for the records will be drawn up and applied to records created.
- The Authority'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 may 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 Authority or another partner, to be responsible for management of the core records.

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- If Derbyshire County Council is nominated to manage the partnership's records, then the Authority'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.

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