

<b>Information Governance Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>20 September 2016</b>
<b>Corporate Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>For Decision</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Innovation and Transformation
<b>Outcome</b>	Continuously examine and introduce ways to provide services in more accessible and efficient ways.
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Elizabeth Beattie
<b>Cost:</b> (If applicable)	

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Information represents a significant asset for the Council and how the Council deals with the information we hold, disclose or dispose of should be well managed.
- 1.2 Management of this area of work lies within the Information Governance section of Council and Information Governance covers a wide range of issues, from how we record and hold information, to how the Council deals with requests for access to information, to security of information and how we dispose of information.
- 1.3 In order to ensure that the Council has an adequate governance framework in place management and protection of information, a number of policies and procedures have been developed.
- 1.4 A Data Protection Policy and Freedom of Information Policy have already been adopted by Council but a number of other issues have also now been addressed through the development of appropriate policies and procedures.

## **2.0 Information Governance Framework**

- 2.1 The following documents have now been developed. These have been considered by the Council's legal team and those that have staff implications have also been considered by the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee:

- Records Management Policy
- Records Management - Staff Handbook
- A Guide to Physical, Document and ICT Security
- Requests for Information – General Staff Procedure
- Data Protection Act 1998 – Guidance for Staff and Members
- Data Protection Act 1998 – Subject Access Requests Procedure Manual
- Data Security Breach – Guidance and Management
- Information About Employees – What Information Could Be Disclosed About You Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Information Risk and Assurance
- Version Control Guidance
- Guidance on Redaction
- Information Security – Applicable Legislation Register

2.2 The Records Management Policy is the only document requiring formal adoption by Council and a copy is attached for consideration. The other documents listed are procedures and guidance documents for internal use within Council but copies can be made available if required.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Council approval of the draft Records Management Policy.



## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Policy Number	CCG/27/16/P
Version Number	1.0
Author	L McKee

Date of Screening of Policy	27 July 2016
EQIA Recommended?	NO
Date Adopted by Council	
Date Policy Revised	

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Records management is defined as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information of business activities and transactions in the form of records.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council:

- recognises that its records are part of the cultural and archival heritage and resources of the community it serves;
- accepts that it has an obligation to ensure that its records are managed effectively and at least cost, commensurate with legal, operational and information requirements; and
- is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the Public Records Act (NI) 1923; the Disposal of Documents Order (No.167) 1925; the Data Protection Act 1998; and the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Records Management procedures will take cognizance of the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records under Section 46 (part 1 section 7), the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Northern Ireland Records Management Standards, published by PRONI (Appendix A), and The Northern Ireland Ombudsman guidance on Good Administration and Record Management (Appendix B).

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

### 2.1. Aims of the policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure the creation and management of authentic, reliable and useable records, capable of supporting the functions of Council for as long as they are required.

The aims of the policy are to:

- establish a Council-wide framework for the management of records in all mediums;
- promote and ensure compliance with legislative requirements and best practice standards;
- ensure that all records can be used as an information resource which enhances their value as assets of the organisation; and
- identify the roles and responsibilities for ensuring good records management.

### 2.2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created or received by the Council in the course of its business. The same Records Management principles apply irrespective of the medium in which the record is held.

A record is any paper, book, email message, photograph, microfilm, map, drawing, artefact, chart, audio or video recordings, magnetic tape, disk, optical disk or electronic storage medium.

*(The policy statement should be signed and dated as follows by relevant Council representatives and Trade Union representatives)*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive  
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

Records management is defined as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information of business activities and transactions in the form of records.

A record is defined as 'information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business'

### **4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Records Management Policy. All employees are expected to follow this policy and take the appropriate action to meet the aims and objectives. Appendix A provides a summary of the roles and responsibilities of key persons.

### **5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS / ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1. Good Administration and Records Management Principles**

To meet the demands of the policy, guidance in line with the principles of Good Administration and Records Management as laid out by the Northern Ireland Ombudsman and Information Commissioner will be developed. The 8 guiding principles are:

- Get it right
- Focus on the customer
- Be open and accountable
- Act fairly and proportionately
- Putting things right
- Strive for improvement
- Create good quality records
- Manage Records Effectively

#### **5.2. Objectives**

By working in accordance with this Policy, the Council intends:

- to implement best practice in its systems and procedures for records management, data protection and access to information legislation to ensure that records are managed throughout their life cycle in the medium most appropriate to the task they perform;
- to develop and maintain information retrieval systems which facilitate access to individual records and the information they contain, enable them to be retrieved quickly and accurately and identify their relationship with other records held by the Council;

- to ensure records are protected and kept secure in a manner commensurate with their value to the operation and business continuity of the Council and the archival heritage of the County;
- to ensure records are retained for the appropriate period of time and that those records worthy of permanent preservation are identified as early as possible through the creation and implementation of a Retention and Disposal Schedule;
- to ensure the Council's notification entry in the Data Protection Register is accurate, and that personal data is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Principles and the other requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998; and
- to ensure the Council's Publication Scheme is maintained and complied with, and that requests for information are handled in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **5.3. Council's Operating Standards**

By implementing the policy, the Council will ensure that:

- we manage information effectively as a strategic Council resource. Information resources, regardless of where they are held, are a corporate resource and the property of Council. All information resources and processes must add value to the work of the Council and demonstrate value for money;
- we are all responsible for the Council's information assets. Those with specific responsibility for managing information assets must be clearly identified. All users are accountable for their use of information;
- we share information (responsibly) with our colleagues, partners and customers. Staff should be able to access information for the effective performance of their role and there should be the opportunity for the free flow of information, within legislative boundaries, across the Council. The choice of IT systems, and decisions about their implementation, should take account of the increasing requirement for the need for effective and appropriate access;
- we protect information, especially personal information, which cannot be shared for legal reasons, e.g. in relation to privacy, security or due to commercial sensitivity;
- we produce accurate information and meet our customers' expectations. Information must be timely, relevant and consistent, with duplication of information kept to a minimum;
- we maintain our information in compliance with our statutory obligations. Information management must comply with prevailing legislation, and managed in accordance with Council policies, standards and procedures and kept secure as appropriate;
- we keep adequate records of what we do, and retain them in the most cost effective way.
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### **5.4. Linkages**

This Policy provides the framework to guide the Council's practice in relation to Records Management Procedures and links to the Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule.



## **6. EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

The Records Management Policy will, under normal circumstances, be reviewed every three years, and, from time to time, updates and re-issues will be circulated.

However, the policy will be reviewed sooner in the event of any one or more of the following:

- Failure of weakness in the policy is highlighted
- Changes in legislative requirements.
- Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements.

## **7. SECTION 75 EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is fully committed to meeting its obligations in relation to Equality and Good Relations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. In this regard this policy will be screened using Section 75 guidelines and will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment if found necessary as a result of the screening process.

## **8. CONTACT DETAILS**

Any issues or queries relating to this policy should be addressed to:

Head of Policy  
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council  
66 Portstewart Road  
Coleraine  
BT52 1EY

Tel: 028 7034 7163

E-Mail: [elizabeth.beattie@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.beattie@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

## **Appendix A**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

As compliance with this policy and the legislation to which it relates is very important to the business needs of the Council and its commitment to accountability and openness, the following key people have a role in encouraging the implementation of best practice:

#### **The Council**

The role of the Council, exercised in the first instance through the relevant Committee, is to set the policy on records management issues and to ensure that those responsible for the implementation of the policy are held accountable for its delivery.

#### **Individual Members**

The role of individual Members of the Council is to ensure that they support the concept of good record management and adhere to the principles of data protection and freedom of information as public representatives.

#### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the Council complies with legislative requirements relating to records management, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

#### **Directors and Departmental Heads**

Each Director / Departmental Head is responsible for the management of the records within their Department and for the application of the policy within their areas of responsibility.

#### **Head of Policy**

The Head of Policy is responsible for the promotion and communication of the policy, to monitor compliance by Departments / Directorates, in consultation with Directors and to be the 'corporate champion' of good records management.

#### **Senior Managers**

All managers in the Council are accountable to their supervising managers for ensuring that all information and records systems within their operational responsibilities comply with the record management guidelines. They are also responsible for ensuring that guidelines and records management procedures are developed and maintained for their operational units and communicated to employees.

#### **All Employees**

All employees are accountable to their line managers for compliance with this policy and the related corporate guidelines and operational procedures, which will be communicated to them.

#### **Others**

This policy also applies to any individual organisation acting on behalf of the Council.