

Staffordshire County Council Records Management Manual




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Staffordshire
County Council


Managing Records

Records, whether paper documents, electronic files, e-mails, databases or scanned images, are evidence of the business we undertake, and as such are vitally important for Staffordshire County Council, and to the citizens of Staffordshire. Managing records effectively, in a way that supports efficient working practice and meets our legal responsibilities is the responsibility of all staff working for Staffordshire County Council.

The Records Management Manual has been produced by the [Information Governance Unit](#). It provides guidance for all staff on key aspects of managing records, including creation (or receipt), capture into recordkeeping systems, storage and maintenance, retention, and their ultimate disposal.

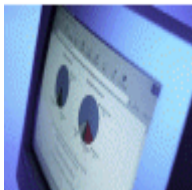
At a glance: responsibilities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that you are aware of Staffordshire County Council policies, standards and guidance which impact on the way you manage records and information. These form part of Staffordshire County Council's Information Governance Framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define & assign records management responsibilities and authorities to roles and named individuals so that it is clear who is responsible for making decisions and taking necessary actions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff have necessary records management knowledge and skills.

At a glance: Creating records	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the records which need to be created and received to document business activities, and ensure that they are complete, accurate, and up to date.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which is the latest version or master copy of a record and ensure it is managed appropriately.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not create unnecessary duplicate copies.

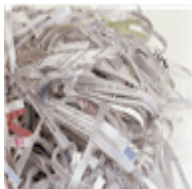
At a glance: Capturing records	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop adequate shared recordkeeping systems, rather than personal filing, to ensure all records can be located when required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Base the arrangement of the shared recordkeeping system on the Staffordshire County Council Business Classification Scheme.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture and associate sufficient information (metadata) with records to help interpret, retrieve and manage records.
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At a glance: Storing and maintaining records

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store records in appropriate systems, locations, conditions and in equipment that is appropriate to their media, format and security.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies to ensure electronic information will remain accessible, readable, usable and can be relied upon for as long as it is required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control access rights to ensure records and recordkeeping systems are secure considering their sensitivity or importance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and record the movement, location of records and log activities, such as, who has created, accessed, amended or deleted a record.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop business continuity plans which include the protection and recovery of records.

At a glance: Retaining and disposing of records

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and review how long records need to be kept for to meet legal and regulatory obligations and business needs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you are aware of Staffordshire County Council general and service specific policies for retaining records.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally assign responsibilities for authorising the disposal of records.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispose of all copies of records, in all media and formats, securely considering sensitivity and security classification.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document the disposal process.








































For help or advice with any aspect of Records Management contact:

Records Management Team, Information Governance Unit 8326

Or view our on-line resources on the Staffordshire County Council Intranet [here](#).

Records Management Manual

Contents

	1	Introduction
	2	Why manage records?
	2.1	What is a record?
	2.2	What is not a record?
	2.3	What do records enable us to do?
	2.4	What makes a good record?
	2.5	Drivers for records management
	3	Who is responsible for managing records?
	4	Creating records
	5	Capturing records
	5.1	Recordkeeping systems
	5.2	Managing the recordkeeping system
	5.3	Classifying records
	5.4	Arranging records
	5.5	Metadata – information about information
	5.6	Titling records
	5.7	Version control
	5.8	Unique identifiers
	5.9	E-mail management
	6	Storing & maintaining records
	6.1	Storing physical records
	6.2	Storing electronic records
	6.3	Preserving digital records
	6.4	Security
	6.5	Protecting vital records
	6.6	File tracking
	7	Retaining records
	7.1	Record retention policies
	7.2	Managing records retention
	8	Disposing of records
	8.1	Responsibilities and authorities
	8.2	Disposal procedures
	9	Information legislation & standards
	9.1	Legislation
	9.2	Standards
	9.3	Codes of practice
	9.4	Staffordshire County Council policies & guidance
	10	Glossary
	11	Compliance check list



1 Introduction

This manual forms a part of the [Information Governance Framework](#) developed by the [Information Governance Unit](#). The purpose of the manual is to raise awareness of, and provide practical guidance about key aspects of records management within Staffordshire County Council.

Records management is a field of management which deals with the systematic control of records and the processes that create records. This manual contains guidance on records management covering **all** records irrespective of the media or format in which they are created or received.

It is essential that Staffordshire County Council properly manages its records and information in order for the Authority to comply with legislation such as the [Local Government Act 2000](#), [Data Protection Act 1998](#) and [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#).

Under Section 46 of the [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA), the Lord Chancellor has produced a records management [Code of Practice](#) which public bodies are recommended to follow. This guidance draws upon recognised records and information management standards. The FOIA [Code of Practice](#) and associated standards are reflected in the guidance in this manual.

As part of the Staffordshire County Council statement [Implementing Electronic Government Return 2006 \(IEG6\)](#) the Authority sets out its commitment to adopting and using the International Records Management Standard [ISO 15489](#) methodology for Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) and identification of areas where current records management policies, procedures and systems need improvement to meet the requirements of [Freedom of Information](#) and [Data Protection](#) Legislation. Staffordshire County Council is committed to using the [ISO 15489 -1](#) methodology through the [Corporate ICT strategy](#).

2 Why manage records?

What should we AIM to do?

Create, receive and manage records that:

- Are capable of supporting Staffordshire County Council's functions and business activities for as long as they are needed.
- Facilitate efficient business administration.
- Inform decision-making.
- Provide evidence of our actions, transactions and decision-making processes.
- Provide evidence that Staffordshire County Council has satisfied statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Protect the interests of Staffordshire County Council, and the rights of employees, clients and stakeholders.
- Allow Staffordshire County Council to be open and accountable.
- Manage records in a way that helps us meet the aims of Staffordshire County Council's [Strategic Plan](#).

2.1 What is a record?

Records are information that is created or received in the course of your job that provides evidence of actions, decisions, transactions. A more formal definition may be:

'Information, created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transactions of businesses'.

“Records” can refer to any recorded information that acts as evidence or information about an activity, and can exist in many formats and media. Records created as part of Staffordshire County Council business are not the personal property of an individual; they belong to the authority and are part of corporate knowledge.

2.2 What is not a record?

Not all information created by business activities is necessarily a record. Items that are **not** records include:

- Stocks of printed or reproduced documents kept for supply purposes where master copies have been retained for record purposes.
- Books, periodicals, newspapers, or other materials kept for reference purposes.
- Duplicate copies of documents preserved only for convenience; materials not filed as evidence of business unit/service operations or for their informative value.
- Personal materials which have no relation to official duties.

It is recommended that non-records are kept in separate filing systems to records. However non-records still need to be actively managed i.e. captured into systems so they can easily be retrieved and disposed of as soon as they are no longer required.

2.3 What do records enable us to do?

Records and their effective management enable Staffordshire County Council to:

- Conduct business in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner.
- Deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Support and document policy formation and managerial decision-making.
- Provide consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration.
- Facilitate the effective performance of activities throughout an organisation.
- Provide continuity in the event of disaster.
- Meet legislative and regulatory requirements including archival, audit and oversight activities.
- Provide protection and support in litigation including the management of risks associated with the existence of, or lack of, evidence of organisational activity.
- Protect the interests of the organisation and the rights of employees, clients and present and future stakeholders.

- Support and document current and future research and development activities, developments and achievements, as well as historical research.
- Establish business, personal and cultural identity and maintain corporate, personal or collective memory.

Staffordshire County Council's [Corporate Records Management Policy](#) which forms part of the [Information Governance Framework](#) recognises the importance of good records management practice to ensure:

- Business efficiency.
- Legal compliance.
- Openness and accountability.
- Support for its decision-making process.
- The rights of Staffordshire County Council, its employees, stakeholders and citizens.

2.4 What makes a good record?

To be of value records must be managed in a way that ensures they:

- Are **Accessible** – the record can be located and retrieved in a timely manner. The record is not stored in systems which leave it inaccessible for example, inboxes.
- Are **Authentic** – the record can be proven to be what it purports to be, to have been created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent it and at the time purported.
- Have **Context** – the business context in which a record was created, received and used should be apparent in the record.
- Have **Integrity** – the record is complete and unaltered with the necessary security applied.
- Are **Reliable** – the record's content can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the action, transaction, or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent activities or transactions, activities or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities.
- Have **Structure** – the record's format and the relationship between the elements comprising the record, should remain intact.
- Are **Useable** – the record can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.

This can only be achieved if records are properly managed from receipt or creation throughout their life-cycle until their disposition. Failure to manage records results in unnecessary risks, potential liabilities and costs for individual staff, Staffordshire County Council and stakeholders.

2.5 Drivers for records management

Drivers for records management in Staffordshire County Council include:

- Compliance with the [Freedom of Information Act](#) and [Data Protection Act](#).
- The need to improve access to information, information flows and information retrieval.
- Information management and knowledge management.

Staffordshire County Council's aim is to continue to lead on ensuring that we comply with [Freedom of Information](#) and [Data Protection](#) with particular emphasis on information, knowledge and records management systems, managing the change from mainly paper based systems to electronic records management, and the introduction of a corporate document management system are set out in the Law and Governance Service Plan 2007-2008.

Records, whether they are received or created by Staffordshire County Council provide evidence of our actions, transactions and decision-making processes. Without records Staffordshire County Council could not carry out the functions for which it is responsible for.

Records not only facilitate business administration and provide information to inform decision-making, they also allow us to be accountable and provide evidence that Staffordshire County Council has satisfied statutory and regulatory requirements and/or enable the Authority to protect itself and its rights.

To meet the aims set in Staffordshire County Council's Corporate Strategy to focus on people and communities and to be a well-managed inclusive Authority – particularly improving services to the public via electronic communications and having effective communications, the Law and Governance Service Plan 2007-2008 sets out Staffordshire County Council's commitment to improving the way the Authority's records are managed highlighting specific measures aimed at improving the management of electronic records.

Staffordshire County Council commitment to electronic records management is highlighted in the Authorities statement [Implementing Electronic Government Return 2006 \(IEG6\)](#). This includes a commitment to implement a corporate Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS) which started with pilot EDRMS projects across Staffordshire County Council. The EDRMS will enable Staffordshire County Council to manage its records and information to meet statutory & regulatory requirements and meet standards such as those set out in the [Lord Chancellor's Code](#)

[of Practice](#) for the Management of Records under the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#).

Managing Records

What do we NEED to do?

We must ensure:

- Sufficient and appropriate records are created and received to support Staffordshire County Council's business activities and decision-making processes.
- Records and information are accurate and up to date, are accessible, useable and can be relied upon for as long as they are required.

3 Who is responsible for managing records?

What should we AIM to do?

- Manage records and information in line with the Staffordshire County Council policies, standards and guidance.
- Define and assign records management responsibilities and authorities throughout Staffordshire County Council so that it is clear who is responsible for making decisions and taking necessary actions.
- Ensure all staff are aware of and carry out their records management responsibilities and authorities.

As employees of Staffordshire County Council we all have a direct responsibility to ensure we manage the records we create or receive to support our roles.

The records we create are not our 'personal' records but are evidence of our actions and our decisions made on behalf of Staffordshire County Council.

Corporate Directors, Directorate Information Managers and other staff have designated responsibility for records management, and should utilise records management guidelines produced by the [Information Governance Unit](#). All staff should be made aware of their specific responsibilities to create and manage records in line with Staffordshire County Council records and information governance policies which form a part of the [Information Governance Framework](#).

Recordkeeping responsibilities should be defined, agreed and documented in, for example, job descriptions and similar statements, as well as agreements & contracts relating to service provision on behalf of Staffordshire County Council, and/or when working in partnership with both internal services and external bodies.

Records management training needs should be analysed by line managers particularly if staff are finding it difficult to fulfil their records management responsibilities because they do not have the necessary records management skills or guidance. The [Information Governance Unit](#) and Directorate Information Managers can offer support where training needs have been identified.

The [Corporate Records Management Policy](#) which is a part of the [Information Governance Framework](#) sets out key records management responsibilities:

- At **director level** for designating a senior officer to take responsibility for implementation of the policy & to represent the directorate on the Information Legislation Group. Also to see that staff are identified to implement the policy.
- **Directors and Directorate Information Managers** are responsible for the written directorate records management policy and its periodical review. The policy should be used to compile and document more specific business unit/service procedures for managing records.
- **Business unit managers & team leaders** to be aware of records management responsibilities & authorities.
- **All managers** are responsible for ensuring staff are aware of records management procedures, their personal responsibilities for recordkeeping. This includes creation of records to support the business activities in which they are involved & their responsibilities to use and manage records & information.
- To ensure staff with specific records management responsibilities have adequate records management knowledge.
- To ensure staff understand broader records management principles & their responsibilities to the County Council, as well as, an understanding of the records management policies and procedures to perform their functional role(s).
- To monitor compliance with the [Corporate Records Management Policy](#).

The Head of Information Governance is responsible for ensuring the:

- Issue of records management guidance (of which this guide forms part).
- Development of record retention schedules and the corporate [Business Classification Scheme](#).
- Facilitation of paper record storage.
- Appropriate destruction of records.
- Completion of compliance audits.
- Development of guidance on Information legislation compliance.

- Security of information across Staffordshire County Council.

For further information and advice concerning records management responsibilities and the [Information Governance Unit](#) please contact the Head of the Information Governance Unit, on (01785) 278326

Records Management Responsibilities

What do we NEED to do ?

Directors must ensure:

- That there is a written directorate records management policy to meet the requirements of the [Corporate Records Management Policy](#).
- The directorate records management policy is reviewed and updated annually and whenever necessary.
- A senior officer is designated to take responsibility for implementation of the [Corporate Records Management Policy](#).

Designated Officers and Senior Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring staff are aware of the policies and standards of Staffordshire County Council's [Information Governance Framework](#).
- Implementing the corporate and directorate records management policies.
- Reviewing and updating the written directorate records management policy.
- Development and review of service-wide records management policies and procedures.
- Ensuring compliance with records management policies and procedures.
- Identifying staff to implement policies and procedures within units.
- Ensuring designated staff are aware of their records management responsibilities and authorities.
- Ensuring staff with specific records management responsibilities have adequate knowledge and skills.

Business unit managers and team leaders must ensure:

- They are aware of their records management responsibilities and authorities.
- Written records management policies and operational procedures governing the creation, capture, maintenance & disposal of records to support business activities for which they are responsible are developed and regularly reviewed and updated.
- Staff are aware of procedures and responsibilities for recordkeeping.
- Staff have adequate training to perform assigned records management duties.
- Monitor compliance with recordkeeping procedures.

All staff are responsible for:

- Creating and receiving records to support Staffordshire County Council's business activities as required by the policies and procedures governing their role.
- Managing records in line with recommended standards, policies and procedures.

4 Creating records

What should we AIM to do?

- Consistently create full, accurate and up to date information to support and evidence Staffordshire County Council's activities, transactions and decision-making processes.

All employees of Staffordshire County Council are responsible for creating sufficient full, accurate and up to date records to support the business activities and decision-making processes in which they are involved.

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring that full and accurate records are created and captured by operational staff into a recordkeeping system.

The implications of specific and general legislation, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice should be taken into consideration when identifying what records are required to support business activities and decision-making processes even if these do not include explicit recordkeeping requirements.

Business unit managers and team leaders should ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities to create records required to support business activities and ensure staff follow procedures.

Records should be complete and accurate to allow:

- Audit or examination by anyone authorised to do so.
- Protection of legal and other rights of Staffordshire County Council and its staff.
- Use as credible and authoritative evidence.

It is recommended that:

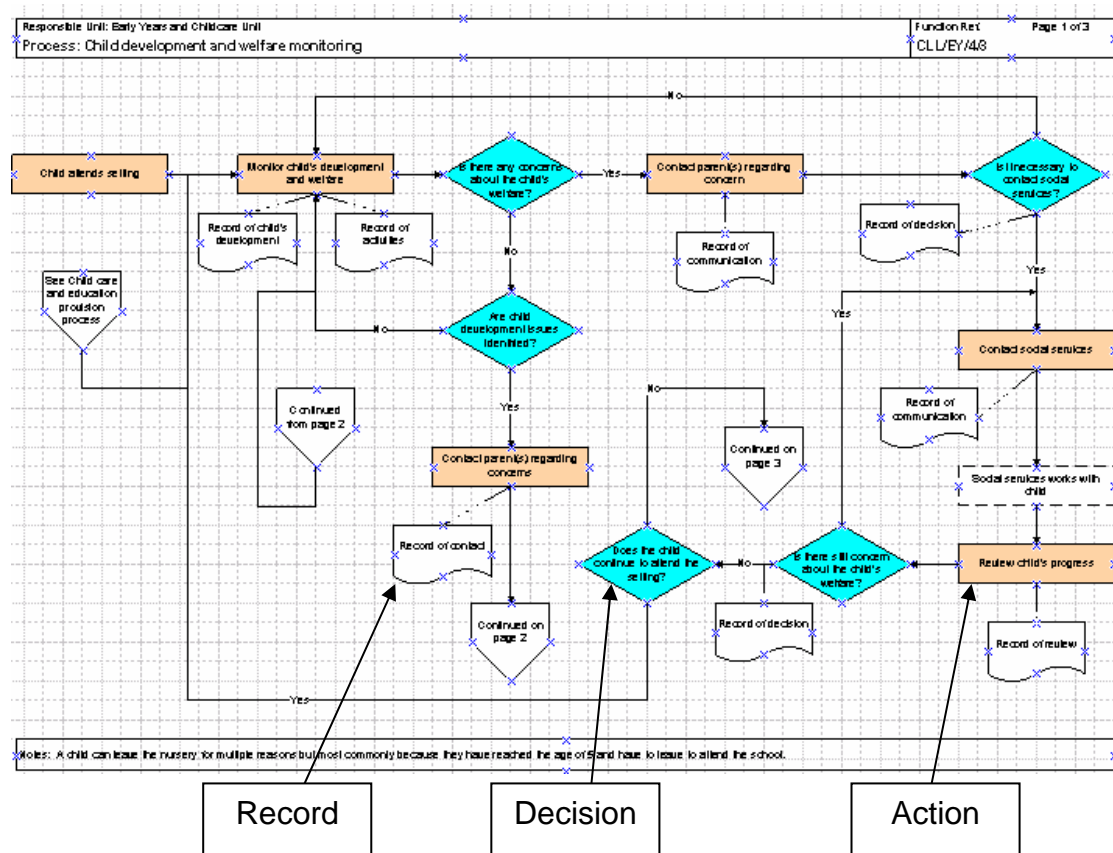
- Operational procedures are documented by business unit managers and team leaders for staff to identify key evidence required to document activities. One of the outputs from [Information Governance Unit records management audits](#) are process maps which identify points where the recording of evidence associated with each activity is required.

- Procedures should ensure an auditable trail of actions.
- Duplicate copies of the same record are not created. The master copy is identified and captured into a shared recordkeeping system.
- Where standard letters and forms are required shared master templates should be created and used to ensure consistency of recording and prevent loss, alteration or accidental disclosure of information. The templates should be accessible to all relevant staff but permissions to create & edit templates need to be controlled. Business unit managers and team leaders should ensure staff have the necessary skills to create proper templates. For example, if using standard Microsoft Office application templates should be saved using *.dot template format*. This will create a new document based on the template each time it is opened.
- Records created should be captured into a recordkeeping system together with sufficient information to enable it to be retrieved, used and interpreted and to prove the record is reliable and has integrity.

Business unit managers may find it useful to map out the activities and processes for which they are responsible. This will then allow you to more readily identify the records that are required to support each business process of which the activities comprise. This will then assist you to ensure that staff are creating and/or receiving sufficient and appropriate records as recommended by the International Records Management Standard [ISO 15489](#).

Below is an extract from a process map which diagrammatically represents the business processes involved in the monitoring of a child's development and welfare in an Early Years setting. The process map is used by the Information Governance Unit to analyse where records should be created or received to support business activities.

Sample process map



The example sets out the processes involved in monitoring a child's development and welfare whilst engaged in child care activities in an Early Years setting. The map also links to related activities and sub-activities. The map shows where evidence is required of the monitoring process, records of contacts, permissions, decision-making and actions taken including referrals where staff identify issues that give cause for concern.

Records Creation

What do we NEED to do?

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring:

- Records required to support and evidence business activities been identified.
- There are written records management operational procedures are in place to ensure full and accurate records are created to provide evidence of business activities for which they are responsible.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities to create records.
- Staff are aware of procedures for documenting business activities and decision-making processes.
- Monitoring compliance with recordkeeping procedures.
- Unnecessary duplicate copies of records and information are not created.
- Proper document templates are created and consistently used.
- The rights to create and edit templates are controlled.

All staff are responsible for:

- Creating and receiving records to support the Staffordshire County Council's business activities as required by the policies and procedures governing their role.

5 Capturing records

What should we AIM to do?

- Develop adequate shared recordkeeping systems to facilitate the effective management of records Staffordshire County Council needs to keep and ensure they can be located when required.
- Capture records to provide evidence of our actions, transactions, commitments, rights, responsibilities and decision-making processes into an appropriate shared recordkeeping system.

5.1 Recordkeeping systems

In order to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements it is important that records are captured into a shared recordkeeping system so they can be located when required.

The purpose of capturing records into a recordkeeping system is to:

- Capture information of an evidential value. Separate systems or parts of the system should be used for storing information required by the business unit which are classified as non-records.
- Facilitate effective searching and retrieval.
- Establish a relationship between the record, the creator and the business context that originated it.
- Link it to other records where required.

The “recordkeeping system” does not have to take the form of software. In a records management context, an effective recordkeeping system is any means of arranging records in such a way as to reflect their business context so that retention, security can be managed consistently, and records can be easily retrieved.

Records should not be saved to PC C: drives - the C: drive is not automatically backed up there is a greater risk of loss due to equipment failure.

It is recommended that electronic records are captured into an EDRMS. Where an EDRMS is not available it is recommended that records are stored in a shared business unit/team recordkeeping system. Records in personal drives are inaccessible to other users, and are less likely to be retained for the appropriate period. An inbox is a personal system.

It is recommended that:

- Records, irrespective of media or format are captured into a **shared** recordkeeping system.
- Rules should be applied to ensure an appropriate and consistent method of titling, indexing and other describing information (metadata) is devised and used for both paper and electronic records.
- The records are arranged according to functions rather than in a subject or organisational structure.
- Procedures are put in place to ensure records are captured into shared recordkeeping systems by staff who work from home or away from the office. Staff who do work away from/at home should comply with the Staffordshire County Council [Home working guidelines](#) and [Information Security Policy](#). Staff should be aware of the potential risks associated with the practice of using removable storage devices and downloading records on to Staffordshire County Council systems and equipment. If staff use such devices, records must be captured into Staffordshire County Council's ICT system(s) with due regard for security requirements.
- Directorates should have policies & procedures which clearly state what records may be taken off-site, who is allowed to take records and information off-site, under what circumstances this is permissible, how the information should be protected when off-site and how information created away from the office should be captured into SCC systems.
- Service managers and business unit managers should ensure procedures for scanning and capturing scanned documents comply with appropriate quality standards (see Information legislation and standards).
- The recordkeeping system is monitored to ensure staff are following prescribed procedures for capturing records.

5.2 Managing the recordkeeping system

Records should be arranged within a logical filing system, which should enable files and documents to be quickly located and retrieved and facilitate easy identification of records when they are due to be destroyed or reviewed. Recordkeeping systems should reflect the actions undertaken in doing business which provide metadata describing the business context, provide evidence of where a record is located, identify what action is outstanding, identify who has accessed a record, identify when such access took place and provide evidence of the transactions that have been undertaken on the record. The same arrangement should be used to organise records in all media and formats.

For a recordkeeping system to work:

- The classification should reflect and support the business functions and activities of the organisation.
- Arrangement should consider retention requirements.
- Titles should accurately reflect document/file contents.
- File usage should be monitored.
- Physical movement should be tracked.
- Procedures for using the system should be documented and enforced.
- Users should be trained to understand the system and follow procedures.
- The system should be reviewed and changed to continue to meet business needs.

The use of a shared folder structure and fileplan based on the corporate [Business Classification Scheme](#) would appear to be a reasonable interim step to take to move from an environment where there is little control over electronic records saved on hard drives, personal space, laptops and disks to an EDRMS. However the use of folders cannot emulate the functionality that is required to manage records in accordance with required legal and national standards to which the EDRMS conforms.

The benefits of capturing records into an EDRMS rather than a shared drive include:

- A folder structure in a Windows environment may not support the recommended functional approach to classifying records which is a feature of the EDRMS.
- Evidential records such as e-mails attachments loose essential metadata when captured into the shared folder system.
- When records are migrated into an EDRMS metadata will not be lost.
- The ease of duplication within a folder system means that it is difficult to manage version control and to identify the 'primary' record or its location.
- The overall management of documents is generally 'ad-hoc' within a Windows folder environment. Development of 'local' folder structures does not address the need to manage the organisations records as part of the overall information strategy for Staffordshire County Council. The development of fileplans for individual organisational units are not readily integrated into a corporate functional system.
- It is difficult to identify sequences of documents relating to one business process, using subject based folders or where folders are created for 'security' reasons for named individuals or groups.
- Holding documents on shared drives does not offer the benefits of EDRMS. An EDRMS offers an understanding of context and document content without the need to open documents.

- The lack of correlation between folders and EDRMS functional classification migration can be difficult where document context is not clear would make record migration difficult.
- Not everyone in an organisation is likely to have access to all workgroup folders, so they might not be aware of the information contained in those folders. An EDRMS has sophisticated access controls to enable appropriate information resource location.

5.3 Classifying records

The use of a classification scheme is a requirement of the [International Records Management Standard BS ISO 15489 -1](#). Although the corporate [Business Classification Scheme](#) (BCS) can be used to develop fileplans that is not its intended purpose. The [BCS](#) has been developed to form the framework for managing records in the corporate Electronic Document and Records Management System. Business Classification Schemes reflect the business of the organisation from which they derive and are normally based on an analysis of the organisation's activities. Staffordshire County Council will need to determine the degree of classification control they require for our business purposes.

The [Business Classification Scheme](#) identifies business activities and/or records that are of the same category and then groups them together so the records can be aggregated and managed together at a higher level rather than at individual folder level. Ultimately in an electronic environment users will not need to use folders to store records in. Grouping records together by function makes it easier to assign rules to the records such as the same retention period.

When users want to save a record using the corporate EDRMS they are presented with the [BCS](#). The user can then select from the [BCS](#) the most appropriate classification description to indicate the business context of the record. The record when saved at the appropriate classification level it inherits the rules associate with that level such as retention and security and access controls.

A benefit of the EDRMS is that users do not need to search through the classification as you would have to do in Windows environment or paper recordkeeping system in order to locate the records they need. Using metadata associated with the record, users can search for and retrieve records in a way which is meaningful to them, similar to the way in which you would use a web browser. The EDRMS will enable you to use saved searches to return records together in a way that you need on a regular basis.

The classification scheme is used for:

- Arranging records.
- Ensuring records are named in a consistent manner over time.
- Determining the description to be assigned to a record.
- Assisting users in retrieving records.

- Assisting users in identifying context of records.
- Distributing responsibility for management of particular sets of records.
- Assigning and controlling the retention of records.
- Allowing control of access and security marking.

The five main types of classification structure for arranging records are:

- Functional.
- Hybrid.
- Organisational.
- Spatial.
- Subject.
- Temporal.

The functional model is based on a hierarchy of the functions and activities of the organisation. The functional model has been used by the [Information Governance Unit](#) in the development of a [Business Classification Scheme](#) using the National Archives of Australia's DIRKS methodology Designing and Implementing Record Keeping Systems.

The [BCS](#) identifies the *Functions* that Staffordshire County Council undertakes to achieve its corporate goals and strategies. The [BCS](#) is arranged hierarchically and below *Functions* in the hierarchy are the *Activities* – things we do to achieve and carry out the Authority's *Functions*. In other words it describes what as a Local Authority we are here to do, and the activities we undertake to carry out these functions. Below this in the hierarchy are sub-activities and transactions.

A functional arrangement is employed as an organisation's functions change less frequently than its structure i.e. as an organisation we consistently deliver the same services although responsibility for delivery may change. A functional arrangement makes it easier to:

- Manage filing systems.
- Ensure that the business context of the records is clearly identifiable.
- Link records to their business context which is a key requirement for good records management practice, and is an approach recommended by the [Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice](#) and [ISO 15489 -1](#).

The records management programme adopted by Staffordshire County Council uses the [ISO 15489 -1](#) methodology to develop the functional business classification upon which the EDRMS records management framework relies.

Classification Terminology

Terminology used in a classification scheme should be consistent and meaningful and precise. As for file and record titling terms **do not** use:

- Abbreviations for example, *Health and Safety abbreviated to H & S.*
- Acronyms for example, *HTM Head Teacher Meetings.*
- Internal jargon for example, *'pinks' for 'purchase requisition copies'.*

It is recommended that if you use Synonyms for example, *words with the same or similar meaning for example, 'human resources and 'personnel'* that they are consistently used. Services/business units should develop an ontology and rules for the use of classification terminology. This should ensure that the classification terminology is standardised so the terms are clear and understandable to the most amount of staff possible.

Classification descriptions take the form of a subject and a verb or a verbal noun (a doing word) that give context to the subject, for example, *Training provision, Course development or Highway maintenance instead of Training, Courses, Highways.*

5.4 Arranging records

The arrangement of records should be logical to enable files and records to be easily located and retrieved in a timely manner. The arrangement should also reflect retention requirements to allow records to be easily identified and disposed of.

The use of classification code is not always necessary or useful except perhaps for large and wide-ranging filing systems.

Case and subject files and folders

Within files or folders a consistent logical order should be adopted as appropriate to best facilitate retrieval; for example, by date, invoice or account number. In an electronic system it is possible for individuals to re-order and search for records depending on the metadata available and the functionality of the software or operating system.

Where case or subject files are useful is in bringing together different types of records and information for "ease of reference". Consideration should be given to contents and internal arrangement in relation to the activities the records support and their retention requirements.

Case and subject files include wide ranging records related to a case or subject and tend to be kept for the lifetime of the most important records although it is often difficult to identify what the retention period of the file should be. As weeding material from such files is time consuming, the consequence is that many are kept far beyond their useful life. This takes up space (whether in paper or electronic format), incurs costs and creates potential legal risks.

The technical solution is to split case files amongst the correct categories of the classification scheme. In a paper or electronic environment such as Windows folders this is not always practical. If records are to be maintained in these environments a practical solution is to sub-divide files into sections according to activity and retention requirements.

However, using an Electronic Document & Records Management System with appropriate functionality, such as the Staffordshire County Council corporate EDRMS system, case records can be split according to functions and activities as the EDRMS will enable documents to be returned as a virtual case file offering the ability to view the information as a case but also apply appropriate rules to individual documents. Therefore instead of having to retain all the documents in a case file for the same retention period different periods can be applied to individual documents.

5.5 Metadata – information about information

Metadata is data describing the context, content and structure of records and their management through time. This is information we commonly use to help us interpret, retrieve and manage records. Metadata is also used to record actions and detail of the records management over time to enable us to establish whether a record is authentic, reliable and has integrity i.e. is what it purports to be.

Metadata describes the 'original data' so people who want to use it can easily find it and determine whether the data will meet their needs – without having to absorb the original data themselves. Metadata must be gathered and associated with each record at or before a record is captured. Associating appropriate metadata with a record will make it easier to locate and retrieve records.

Examples of metadata elements include:

- Classification/folder name.
- Subject.
- Title.
- Date created or received.
- Date to or date closed.
- Author(s) or originator.
- Unique identifier e.g. client, case or project reference.
- File format.
- File/access tracking.
- Security marking.
- Retention and disposition actions required.

The following are key metadata elements for paper records:

Mandatory elements	Mandatory if applicable	Recommended
Title	Unique identifier	Retention and disposition actions required
Subject	File access/tracking	
Date file opened	Security marking	
Date file closed		

The following are the [e-Government Metadata Standard's](#) minimum metadata elements for electronic records:

Mandatory elements	Mandatory if applicable	Recommended
Creator	Accessibility	Coverage
Date	Identifier	Language
Subject	Publisher	Date opened and closed
Title		

In addition to the above elements there a number of other metadata elements and which the [e-Government Metadata Standard](#) describe as 'Optional' which should be considered by business units and services.

In a paper recordkeeping system metadata information should be consistently recorded manually on the file cover. In an electronic environment some elements maybe automatically captured when a record is saved into the filing system. Windows will automatically capture the following metadata elements:

- Date created.
- Date modified.
- Date accessed
- Author.
- Title.
- File format.
- Location.
- Attributes.
- Company.

Others metadata elements may need to be entered manually into, for example, in a Windows environment in 'Document Properties'. The following are metadata elements which can also be entered:

- Certain access restrictions such as read-only.
- Subject.
- Name.
- Value.
- Category.

- Keywords.
- Comments.

Metadata elements can also be entered manually into an EDRMS in a 'Record Entry Form'. Service managers and business unit managers should develop a structured & consistent metadata standard for records of their respective service/business unit. They should also make staff aware of the rules and requirements to consistently apply appropriate metadata to records in all formats.

Metadata includes information defined and manually associated with a record by the person creating and / or capturing the record, for example, title, a unique identifier, and author. Metadata may also be inherited from the predefined configuration elements of a recordkeeping system into which records are captured, for example, classification or folder name.

Other metadata should be associated with a record to document actions, who has carried out actions and when, and document the records management overtime, for example, date created, captured, viewed, edited, closed, person carrying out action.

A benefit of using an EDRMS is that in addition to metadata entered by users when a record is captured into the system an EDRMS can enable records to automatically inherit metadata from predefined configuration elements such as classification, retention and security and access controls.

An EDRMS can also be configured to capture a wide range of system log information (record of actions). The log should not only document actions carried out to records but also record changes to metadata and the system itself. By doing so, it can be more readily established whether a record is reliable, authentic or has integrity.

To ensure records' reliability, authenticity and integrity are not invalidated only certain metadata can be changed for legitimate reasons. These include identified inconsistency or error, or change of business need. Once captured changes to user defined metadata should only be made with appropriate authorisation or by staff with designated responsibility.

Services / business units should ensure that operational records management policies and procedures include responsibilities for changing metadata elements used to configure a recordkeeping system, such as, classification, file plan, security and access controls.

Metadata which documents what actions actions have been carried out, by whom and when should not be permitted to be changed. Change to this type of metadata will invalidate a record.

Procedures and responsibilities for changing metadata in an EDRMS are set out in the [EDRMS Configuration, Classification, Retention Policy and Metadata Change and Development Procedures: Roles and Responsibilities](#) document which forms part of the [Information Governance Framework](#).

5.6 Titling records

Documents and files must be clearly titled as soon as they are created. The titling of records in a Windows folder environment is more important than in an EDRMS. This is because records stored in an EDRMS should have more metadata elements associated with it which will make it easier to retrieve rather than just relying on the record's title to locate and retrieve it which is generally the case in a Windows folder environment.

The title should:

- Accurately reflect the content.
- Be brief and simple.
- Be specific and meaningful – Do not use terms such as “General” or “Miscellaneous”.
- Abbreviations should be avoided but if they are used they must be meaningful and consistent.
- Although not essential, it can prove useful to use structured naming convention(s) and language controls for records. This involves using an agreed and consistent terminology.
- Not use the title itself as a means of including additional indexing information. Other information may be required to identify and describe the record (see Metadata) but not necessarily all need to be included in the title itself.
- Use capital letters to delimit words, not spaces or underscores.
- When including a personal name in a file name give the family name first followed by the forename(s) or initials.
- When a file name relates to recurring events the date and a description of the event should be included, except where the inclusion of any of these elements would lead to unnecessary repetition and redundancy in file names and file paths.
- Include in the file name of an e-mail attachment the name of the correspondent, an indication of the subject, the date of the correspondence, ‘attach’ and an indication of the number of attachments sent with the covering e-mail, except where the inclusion of any of these elements would lead to unnecessary repetition and redundancy in file names and file paths.

Service managers and business unit managers should develop structured and meaningful rules for the titling of documents

5.7 Version control

Some records (such as reports and policies) go through various drafting stages. Continued drafting and redrafting of records can often lead to confusion over which draft is the current version and the relationships between the different drafts. Knowing which version of a record you are looking at is important if you are trying to find out which version is currently in force, or which version of a policy was in use at a particular time. In order to manage the different versions of records staff should use version control.

Unnecessary duplication of records and information and lack of version control risks decisions being made and/or reports being produced based on inaccurate or out of date information. Information (metadata) should be captured to ensure that there is a consistent and reliable version of the data from which required outputs can be produced.

Inappropriate duplication can result in difficulties in ensuring that all copies being used are the current version. It is essential that the current master copy is identified and maintained in a shared recordkeeping system. Failure to do so may risk staff acting upon incomplete or superseded information.

To reduce the need for duplication and the risk of not using the current draft/version it is recommended that where possible hyper links should be used instead of document attachments in e-mails. This will prevent unnecessary duplication by automatic reference to the master copy. This should ensure that staff are working from up-to-date and accurate information maintained in the latest draft/version or master copy.

Unique version identifiers should be used to distinguish between different drafts and final versions and highlight when a document/record becomes the final version.

There are a number of ways to indicate the version of a document including: Draft version; 1Version; 0.1; Draft 1.0; Draft 1; 0.01.

However, the [e-Government Metadata Standard](#) recommends the use of decimal increments. A distinction should be made between revisions or 'drafts' and versions. Whilst any revisions to a document are 'drafts' versions are the final output;

- The first draft would be Draft v0.1 then 0.2 etc.
- It can also be useful to indicate the status of the document in the title of the document as well as the numbering for example, Consultation Draft v0.9 or Approved Draft v0.10.
- Once the document has moved to a final version, then the integer values should be started, so the first final version would be Version 1.0. If this version was updated for any reason and minor revisions made, then the next version would be Version 1.1 and so on. If major changes are made a second final version would become Version 2.0, and so on.

It is recommended that the schema below is used as the basis for implementing version control:

- Draft v0.1
- Draft v0.2
- Draft v0.3 Approved for consultation
- Draft v0.4 Consultation
- Draft v0.5 Second round consultation
- Draft v0.6 Post consultation draft
- Draft v0.10 Approved draft
- Version 1.0 For publication/submission
- Version 1.1 To indicate minor revision(s) have been made to the previously published version)
- Version 2.0 For publication/submission

These examples can be used by staff wishing to implement version control in their service/business unit. The version number should follow the title of the record.

Version control measures should be applied to records in all formats and mediums. Although an EDRMS may automatically record some information in the form of metadata associated with a record, information relating to version control will need to be manually added to records either in the title, on a file cover, or in a document header/footer.

Version control measures should be implemented by business units. Team leaders should take responsibility for ensuring staff use these measures consistently so that actions and decisions are based on accurate and up-to-date information.

5.8 Unique identifiers

Unique identifiers should be assigned to records to enable records to be easier identified and retrieved. The title of a record alone may not be sufficient because there is always the risk that two records have the same title or titles may be subject to change. Personal names are not adequate as unique identifiers for clients or employees either because individuals may have identical names or may change their name. The simplest form of a code is using a numerical code with continuous numbers.

5.9 E-mail management

E-mails are the chosen medium for business communication. The ability to archive, search and understand vast stores of e-mail with effectiveness and ease is imperative in order to mitigate corporate risk during litigation.

You should be aware:

- That e-mails may be evidential records. A great deal of 'corporate knowledge' is contained in e-mails which means they should be retained to protect the rights of Staffordshire County Council, employees, customers and stakeholders.
- That you should not use private e-mail accounts for sending e-mails relating to Staffordshire County Council business activities.
- Of and comply with the Staffordshire County Council [ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#) which details acceptable and non-acceptable use of the corporate e-mail system. You should not abuse the e-mail system.
- E-mails are legally admissible they may be disclosed under access to information legislation or in a court of law. Before you send e-mails you should ask yourself the question, is the content of this e-mail accurate and appropriate?
- That where possible hyperlinks should be used instead of document attachments in e-mails. This will prevent unnecessary duplication and ensure that staff are working from up-to-date and accurate information maintained in the latest draft/version or master copy.
- That storage of electronic records including e-mails incurs large storage and maintenance costs. There is a corporate commitment to reduce the unnecessary use of electronic storage space.
- You should actively manage your inbox – disposing of non-evidential e-mails as soon as they are no longer needed but should ensure that evidential e-mails are consistently captured and managed in a shared recordkeeping system outside of the e-mail application. Ideally they should be captured into an EDRMS if you have not got access to an EDRMS then a shared recordkeeping would be an acceptable interim step.
- Steps should be taken to ensure evidential e-mails created are accessible and in the worst case are not lost for good. If staff leave managers should ensure staff have captured e-mails in a shared recordkeeping system.
- The need to retain and dispose of evidential e-mails in accordance with the [corporate and business unit retention schedules](#). The corporate commitment to reduce the amount of electronic space available for electronic storage does not mean staff should be deleting e-mails in an ad-hoc manner.

The [information audits](#) conducted throughout Staffordshire County Council have revealed that a number of staff are not sure as to how best manage e-mails resulting in variety of practices:

- Printing hard copies.
- Saving into folders on the personal and shared drive.

- Keeping in inboxes or saving to Outlook folders.

Printing off e-mails or capturing them into an electronic folder system results in the loss of key metadata associated with an e-mail record. E-mails like all records should not be stored in personal folders (see Capture-recordkeeping systems). Storing e-mails in personal folders or in a number of different locations and/or storage mediums makes it difficult for them to be easily retrieved. The cost and effort particularly in terms of time spent by staff attempting to retrieve e-mails stored in laptops, discs and even staff's home computers could be huge. Particularly for example if under a [Freedom of Information](#) request hundreds of e-mails relating to a particular matter were requested.

An EDRMS will allow staff to save their e-mails in an appropriate system which means the key metadata will not be lost. If staff do not have access to an EDRMS it is recommended that in the interim they follow the [Managing your mailbox](#) guidelines produced by the [Information Governance Unit](#). These guidelines should help staff to differentiate between informational and evidential e-mails. Support in managing e-mails should also be provided for operational staff by service managers, business unit managers and team leaders.

Capturing Records

What do we NEED to do?

Designated officers and senior managers are responsible for:

- The development of service-wide recordkeeping systems for the management of records in all media and formats based on the Staffordshire County Council Corporate [Business Classification Scheme](#).
- Ensuring scanning is carried out with reference to appropriate standards.
- Ensuring e-mails are managed in accordance with Staffordshire County Council guidelines.

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring:

- That a shared recordkeeping system is available for staff to capture records into.
- There are written records management operational procedures in place to ensure full and accurate records are created to support business activities for which they are responsible.
- Staff are aware of policies, standards and procedures, and their responsibilities to capture records.
- Staff capture records into shared recordkeeping systems.
- Records are arranged in a logical filing system based on the functions and activities of the business unit.
- Appropriate information (metadata) is associated with records to help interpret, retrieve and manage records.
- Documents and records are clearly and consistently titled and identifiable.
- Evidential e-mails are captured and managed in a shared recordkeeping system.

All staff are responsible for:

- Capturing records into shared recordkeeping systems as required by policies, standards and procedures.

6 Storing & maintaining records

What should we **AIM** to do?

- Store and maintain records in a manner that ensures they remain accessible, authentic, reliable and useable and have context, integrity and structure for as long as they are needed.

6.1 Storing physical records

Active paper records required for current business needs should be stored in filing equipment appropriate for their storage and security needs as well as close to where they are used. Business unit managers, team leaders and operational staff should periodically review filing equipment and storage conditions to ensure they still are appropriate. Storage locations and equipment should be clean, dry and secure. The storage location for most active records will normally be in office space. However, this does not necessarily mean in the record users' office.

The recommended specification for the storage conditions of semi-current and inactive records can be found in the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#) produced by the [Information Governance Unit](#). Service managers, business unit managers and team leaders should be aware of the standards, the implications and their responsibilities and ensure operational staff follow the standards.

Further advice concerning appropriate storage conditions is available from the [Information Governance Unit](#).

Although records may no longer be needed for immediate business needs they are still required to provide evidence to enable Staffordshire County Council to remain accountable, inform decision-making, protect its rights and protect itself from actions against it. Both semi-active and inactive records need to be retained in systems and conditions that comply with the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#) to ensure records remain Authentic, Reliable and Useable and have Context, Integrity and Structure for as long as they are required to be kept (see Record retention & Record disposal).

The [Information Governance Unit](#) is responsible for managing the [Staffordshire County Council's Record Centre](#). The Service provides high density, low cost record storage, retrieval and disposal. The advantages of transferring records to the records centre include:

- The Record Centre meets all the requirements of the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#).

- Staff will be able to recall records sent to be stored at the Record Centre within 24 hours. This will mean that records could be made available for use whilst still ensuring long-term preservation which the current storage conditions do not provide.
- Records that are transferred to be stored at the Records Centre are destroyed on site by a specialist shredding company and a record is kept of destructions carried out on behalf of the service/business unit.

Appropriate storage conditions are generally not found in basements, attics, cupboards and outbuildings. If a decision is made not to use the Records Centre for medium/long-term storage of semi-current or inactive records any alternative facilities used must comply fully with the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#).

Selection of storage location, equipment and media will need to consider:

- How many people use particular records? – If only one person/small team use the records they should be stored close to them. If records need to be shared by large number of users, somewhere convenient for all.
- How often and how quickly are the records needed by users? – If frequent access is needed records should be stored as close as possible to users otherwise users will tend to pile them up, where they are more convenient for them, such as desks, the floor, window sills where they are neither accessible to others nor secure. If they are required less frequently they can be stored further away, even in off-site storage.
- Space where they can *actually* be stored? - Need to make the most efficient use of space.
- Volume of records.
- Will the storage conditions provide appropriate security and protection? If records contain sensitive and/or personal information access to the records should be restricted.
- Do the storage conditions take into account a record's specific physical and chemical properties?
- Will the storage equipment protect the records from physical deterioration or damage?
- Will the storage equipment be safe and easy to use?
- Will the storage media ensure their usability, reliability, authenticity and preservation for as long as the records are needed?

6.2 Storing electronic records

Records should not be maintained on PC C: drives. Because the C: drive is not automatically backed up there is a greater risk of loss due to equipment failure. A Windows folder environment may not be suitable for long-term storage. The use of portable media to store electronic records is not recommended.

If because of network limitations it is not possible to access and store records on the Staffordshire County Council ICT systems then the use of portable media maybe acceptable in the short-term. However storage conditions and locations must be appropriate. Portable media such as floppy discs and CDs should not be stored in for example, desk draws. Portable media is not suitable for medium/long-term record storage.

It is recommended that records are stored and maintained on the Staffordshire County Council ICT network which is routinely backed up. In addition there should be business continuity and disaster recovery plans in place to ensure that records are securely stored.

Systems for storing electronic records should be designed so that records will remain Accessible, Authentic, Reliable and Useable through any kind of system change, for the entire period of retention. This may include migration (see Preserving digital records) to different software, re-presentation in emulation formats or any future ways of re-presenting records. Where such processes occur, evidence of these should be kept, along with details of any variation in records design and format.

6.3 Preserving digital records

Whilst physical records can be stored in appropriate conditions with relatively little intervention for a number of decades, digital materials may need active management and preservation in order to survive even a few years.

Rapid advances in technology can lead to digital information quickly becoming inaccessible, unreadable and un-useable. Staffordshire County Council must address the issues associated with retention requirements exceeding the expected life of electronic media, formats and systems.

Staffordshire County Council now has a more rigorous evaluation and procurement process in place which should take into account the sustainability of formats, media and systems. It is vital to consider the sustainability of the software or system at the evaluation stages of procurement.

If specialist software or system is already in place there is the challenge of deciding how best to actively manage and preserve electronic records created and stored in existing systems, whilst ensuring that records remain Accessible, Authentic, Reliable and Useable retaining Context, Integrity and Structure. This is particularly important where there is a requirement to retain records for a significant period of time.

Digital preservation strategies

Digital preservation strategies need to be developed to ensure that information will remain Accessible, Readable, and Useable and can be relied upon for as long as it is required. The development of a digital preservation strategy should meet the requirements of Staffordshire County Council's Migration of Records Policy.

A preservation strategy should consist of both a *technical preservation strategy* – how digital data will be kept useable and accessible through technological change and an *organisational strategy* – to ensure the availability of resources such as budget, staff and skills to meet the *technical preservation strategy*. The *technical preservation strategy* should include:

The development of a digital preservation strategy must include:

An assessment to:

- Identify records requiring preservation.

A risk assessment to ensure:

- Accessibility – Records must be equally as accessible and searchable as they were previously in the other system
- Authenticity - Records must retain their authenticity for legal and regulatory purposes
- Accuracy - Measures must be identified and applied to ensure the quality of the data and the preservation process is validated against pre-defined criteria
- Integrity - Where necessary audit trails and versions managed as part of the records will need to remain associated with the records to prove their integrity

Analysis of the legacy system to:

- Understand the functionality of the system.
- Understand the rationale of the existing system's functionality.
- Produce an as is specification to be used for validation purposes.

Selection of metadata to:

- Ensure appropriate existing metadata is captured and migrated to ensure that records are not invalidated.
- Identify additional metadata required to document preservation processes.

Documentation to:

- Fully and accurately record all decisions and actions to allow future understanding of the preservation processes.

Digital preservation methods

Although there are other methods of digital preservation the two main strategies are:

- Conversion - Changing records from one medium or format to another.
- Migration - Transferring electronic documents from one software/hardware environment or storage medium to another with little or no alteration to the structure, content or context. When planning to migrate electronic documents reference should be made to the SCC Migration Strategy which forms part of the [Information Governance Framework](#).

Key risks of not properly planning how electronic records can be preserved for as long as they are required include:

- Loss of metadata associated with the record's context resulting in not being able to interpret the record.
- Loss of metadata associated with the record's provenance may mean it cannot be proved to be reliable and authentic, or have integrity.
- Loss of metadata may render the records inaccessible, unreadable or un-useable.
- Loss of content due to technical faults.
- Inability to access or read electronic records due to software, hardware, or media obsolescence.
- Loss of technical support and expertise to maintain software/systems.
- Selection and use of storage medium and/format.
- Loss of records due to use of unsuitable storage equipment and/or inappropriate conditions for storage of electronic media.
- Physical deterioration and/or damage of the storage medium.
- Sustainability of software and/systems not assessed during procurement.
- Lack of resources identified and assigned to ensure electronic records remain accessible, readable and useable.
- Preservation decisions left until it is too late to act.

Whilst an EDRMS cannot ensure digital records can be preserved an EDRMS can provide information to assist in preserving electronic records, about the format of the records, and by recording information about what has happened to a document since it was created and captured.

An EDRMS records action carried out (including migration), by whom and when in a system log. By recording the record's management over time an EDRMS captures information to enable records to remain accessible, useable and have structure and context, and provide evidence that a record is reliable, authentic and has integrity.

6.4 Security

The management of the security of information and records is essential to protect the information assets of Staffordshire County Council and its partners. This ensures business continuity, minimises risk and protect the rights of individuals about whom we hold information on.

Staff should be aware of potential risks that exist in what maybe perceived to be a secure internal environment, particularly where sensitive business and personal information is used and stored.

It is essential to ensure the authenticity, confidentiality, context, integrity, reliability, structure and usability of records and information held in all media and formats.

Planning is required to ensure that records are:

- Easy to retrieve.
- Protected from deterioration or damage.
- Protected from unauthorised access.

Key risk factors are:

- Accidents.
- Crime.
- Lack of security and access control and poor practice.
- Lack of record and record access tracking procedures.
- Poor environmental conditions.
- Natural disasters.
- Unauthorised disposal.

Do not store records in areas where there is a risk of, for example:

- Accidental damage from fire or water damage.
- Exposure to heat, cold, humidity, dryness, direct sunlight or environmental pollution.
- Natural disasters such as flooding.
- Risk of intentional or unintentional unauthorised access in what might be perceived to be a secure internal environment.

- Theft or damage due to crime.

Once risks have been assessed ensure that:

- Business Continuity (Disaster Prevention and Management) Plans are in place and kept up to date by service managers and business unit managers with support from Information Governance Unit
- Security requirements of records are identified to ensure appropriate controls are put in place by assigning access status to both records and individuals.
- Security measures are put in place to restrict access by unauthorised persons including regulating who is permitted access to records and record storage areas and in what circumstances.
- Paper records are stored in appropriately secure lockable filing equipment and storage facilities to which access is controlled.
- Computer screens are not left as readable when absent from your desk or work area. It is recommended that the screen is locked using the CTRL+ALT+DEL keys and then selecting the option to Lock Computer.
- Computer users logout when absent from their workstations for longer periods for example, attending meetings.
- Ensure staff are aware of the security risks associated with capturing electronic documents from other systems or portable storage media into the County Council's ICT systems.
- Staff are aware of the importance of ensuring records are secure whilst working in public areas and when working at home, or away from the office environment.
- Staff should be aware of security risks to records and equipment whilst working in public areas and when working at home, or away from the office environment.
- Sensitive documents/papers are never taken out without authorisation. The details must be logged including who and the reasons for removal and duration.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and liabilities for information under the legislation that guides the service provision.
- Storage areas comply with the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#) or transfer records to [Staffordshire County Council's Record Centre](#).

It should be noted that in a Windows folder environment security settings that permit users to save documents to the folder give users the ability to purposely or inadvertently delete evidential records which does not comply with Staffordshire County Council retention policy. Within an EDRMS this is not possible as permissions within the system will prevent unauthorised amendment or deletion.

Security within a structured folder system is less sophisticated than within an EDRMS environment. The application of password protection to individual folders and documents can prevent migration to an EDRMS. Development and maintenance of security structures will be time consuming and will not necessarily be transferable to the EDRMS.

Business unit managers and team leaders should ensure that access rights and security levels are assigned to recordkeeping systems, records and individuals. The ability to view, amend and delete records should be controlled and actions recorded. All staff should be made aware by business unit managers and team leaders of the [Staffordshire County Council Clear Desk and Screen Policy](#) and implement their own policies in their respective business units.

6.5 Protecting vital records

All records are important resources that need to be protected to ensure the continued success and long-term ability of Staffordshire County Council to perform its work but a very small percentage of records are vital records which need particular protection. Vital records are any recorded information in any media that is identified as essential for the continuation or survival of Staffordshire County Council if disaster strikes. Vital records can consist of both active and inactive records. If Staffordshire County Council were to lose vital records in a disaster and it became apparent that steps had not been taken to protect them the Authority and potentially individuals could be liable.

How can a vital record be identified?

- Would the record be necessary in order for the Staffordshire County Council to fulfil its functions and continue its activities?
- Is this record necessary to protect assets, protect legal and financial status of Staffordshire County Council, or preserve the rights and obligations of the Authority and its employees, customers and stakeholders?
- Could the business unit continue to carry out specific business activities without these records?
- Is this information accessible in more than one medium or location?
- Are there other sources - inside or outside of Staffordshire County Council service/business unit- from which this record can be retrieved?

Service managers and business unit managers should identify vital and key records that enable the service/business unit to perform its functions and take appropriate measures to ensure their security. An example of a Staffordshire County Council vital record is Property deeds.

How should vital records be protected?

Paper records should be stored in appropriate condition which are protected as far as possible from the risks listed above, commensurate with the level of risk that loss of such records would incur. Specific measures for the protection of vital records should be incorporated into business continuity planning. Business continuity planning should form part of risk management strategies in line with the [Staffordshire County Council Risk Management Policy](#) statement.

For the protection of vital physical records the following strategies should be considered:

- Strict access controls to the records and recordkeeping systems for authorised individuals and record tracking.
- Distributing copies of vital records to locations significantly away from the master copy for emergency use.
- Duplicate records in other media for example, microfilm or scanned image files.
- Storing records in a fire-resistant vault or in certified fire and heat resistant filing equipment.

For the protection of vital electronic records the follow strategies should be considered:

- Strict security and access controls to the records and recordkeeping systems (see Security). Access should be limited to authorised individuals only. File tracking should be implemented for both physical and electronic records (see File tracking).
- Duplicate electronic records regularly on back-up media and store offsite.
- Establish mirror sites of electronic records systems that are identified as vital and make them resident at a distant location.

Service managers and business unit managers should ensure that key records essential to the service's operations are captured into appropriately secure systems, equipment, media and formats and that the buildings in which they are stored are secure. The security of storage should be reviewed and if reasonable steps cannot be taken to secure the storage facilities themselves consideration should be given as to whether a practicable means of back up is a cost effective way of reducing risk.

6.6 File tracking

Tracking of the movement and use of records within a records system is required to:

- Enable retrieval of a record.
- Prevent loss or misplacement of records.
- Monitor usage for systems maintenance and security and maintain an auditable trail of records transactions (i.e. capture or registration, classification, indexing, storage, access and use, migration and disposition).

The following information should be documented in order for the location of records to always be located when required:

- The record's unique reference number.
- The record's/file's title.
- The person and business unit/team who is in possession of the record
- The date that the record was taken out of the system.
- The record's proposed return date.

Tracking mechanism may record the item identifier, the title, the person or unit having possession of the item, any action taken and the time/date of movement.

Action tracking for physical records can be logged using a sheet associated with a record to document access and actions

The corporate EDRMS will automatically provide an auditable trail of transactions including: who created, accessed, and amended a record. In addition the EDRMS will track migration to other formats. If staff have not got access to an EDRMS business unit managers and team leaders should introduce a system to track the location and movement of physical records such as a cards or slips to document the above.

Storing & maintaining records

What do we NEED to do ?

Designated officers and senior managers are responsible for ensuring:

- All records are retrievable, useable, can be interpreted and proved to be reliable and have integrity for as long as they are required irrespective of media and format.
- Electronic records remain accessible, readable and useable for as long as they are required by developing digital preservation strategies.
- Business recovery plans are in place to ensure business continuity in the event of an emergency/disaster situation.
- Relevant staff are aware of the [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#).

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring:

- Written procedures are in place for storing and maintaining records.
- Staff are aware of and follow procedures for storing and maintaining records.
- Records are accessible through shared recordkeeping systems.
- Records are stored in appropriate conditions to ensure they remain accessible and useable for as long as they are required.
- Records are managed in a way that ensures they are authentic, reliable and have integrity.
- Paper records are stored in appropriate locations and equipment.
- Storage conditions for semi-current and inactive meet [Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage](#).

7 Retaining Records

What should we AIM to do?

- Establish and review how long Staffordshire County Council needs to keep records to meet its legal and regulatory obligations and business needs.
- Manage records in a way that ensures records are retained in accordance with Staffordshire County Council records retention policies

Retaining records indefinitely just in case they are needed again or disposing of on an ad-hoc basis when there is a lack of storage space is unacceptable and in some cases may be illegal. This causes Staffordshire County Council to incur unnecessary costs and pose significant risks. Under Information Legislation, individuals can also be deemed personally liable, for inappropriate disposal of records.

7.1 Record retention policies

The development and application of retention schedules is a requirement of the [Lord Chancellor records management Code of Practice](#) under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act and Staffordshire County Council's [Corporate Records Management Policy](#).

The [Information Governance Unit](#) is responsible for developing record retention policies and procedures governing how long records of all formats should be retained. Retention policies for [Contractual](#), [Financial](#), [Health & Safety](#) and [Personnel](#) records have been developed by the [Information Governance Unit](#) in collaboration with Directorates and Legal Services.

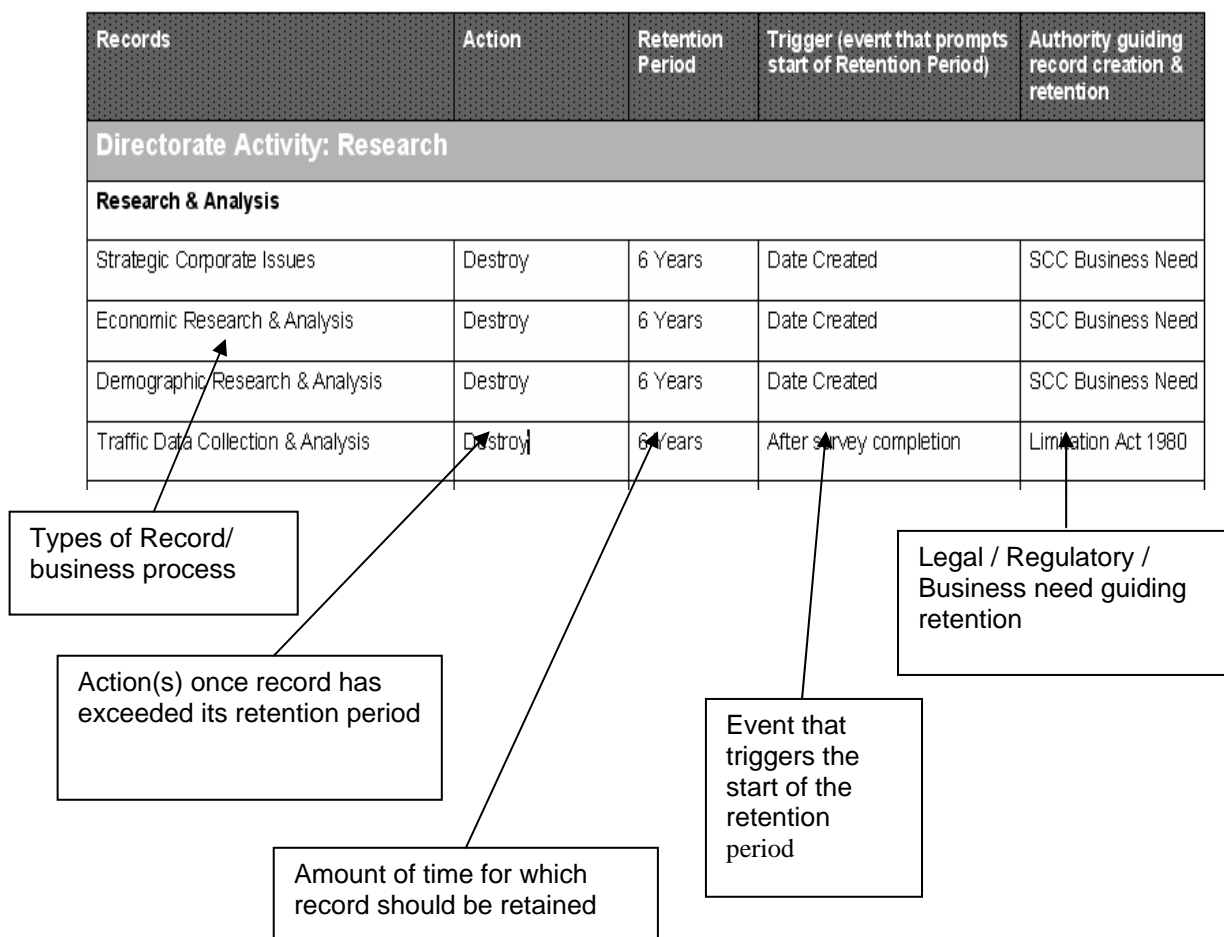
A retention schedule:

- Describes functions and activities and lists the supporting records which need to be retained by Staffordshire County Council.
- Identifies a period of time for which records are to be retained.
- Describes the “trigger” event that prompts the start of the retention period.
- Identify the reasons (legislative, regulatory and/or operational) that governs the activity and on which retention decisions are based.

A series of [retention schedules](#) has been produced for outward facing Public Services and key internal governance and administrative functions.

Information about using and interpreting the schedules are included as a forward to each [schedule](#) document.

The [Information Governance Unit](#) has produced records [retention schedules](#) for business units across Staffordshire County Council, and they all follow a similar format. The graphic below demonstrates how to interpret the schedule:



If you have any record retention queries you should contact the Record Analyst team on 01785 278176.

The [Information Governance Unit](#), business unit managers and team leaders should regularly review records retention policies. The [Information Governance Unit](#) should be informed of any changes to legislation, regulation, guidelines or business needs including changes to functions for which Staffordshire County Council is responsible for affecting record retention policy.

The [Information Governance Unit](#) will assess the request and where necessary consult with other users of records, recordkeeping system and/or Legal Services. Changes to corporate policy will require authorisation in line with corporate information governance procedures.

7.2 Managing records retention

An EDRMS will actively manage record retention and the assigned retention period and triggers are directly associated with the classification of the record. It is not possible to apply retention at folder level particularly where contents do not specifically relate to one business process. Time consuming weeding will be required if appropriate disposal is to be carried out in line with retention policy. Within an EDRMS document retention is applied using predefined criteria alerts authorised personnel that records are due for destruction. Such functionality does not exist with the Windows folder environment.

With support from the [Information Governance Unit](#), senior managers, business unit managers and team managers should ensure all staff are maintaining records in systems which enables retention to be applied. In addition record closure or appropriate retention triggers should be identified and clearly and consistently indicated in/on records

Retaining Records

What do we NEED to do?

Designated officers and senior Managers are responsible for ensuring:

- Records are maintained in systems that enable records retention to be implemented in all media and formats.

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring:

- Information is provided to assist the [Information Governance Unit](#) in the development of records retention policies.
- Record retention policies affecting the functions and activities for which they are responsible are reviewed annually.
- The [Information Governance Unit](#) is informed of changes to legislation, regulations, guidelines, codes of practice, change of responsibilities of Staffordshire County Council for carrying out functions and activities, or business needs.
- Recordkeeping systems and arrangement of records enable retention to be applied.
- Staff are aware of, and retain records in accordance with records retention policy.
- The [Information Governance Unit](#) is contacted for retention advice where Staffordshire County Council retention policies are not yet been developed.
- Master copies of records are identified and maintained in accordance with retention policy and duplicate documents destroyed.

All staff are responsible for:

- Retaining records in accordance with records retention policy.
- Identifying changes to legislation, regulations, guidelines, codes of practice, business processes that may impact on retention requirements.

8 Disposing of records

What should we AIM to do?

- Dispose of records in accordance with [Staffordshire County Council retention policies](#).
- Manage records in a way that allows records due for disposal to be easily identified.
- Dispose of all copies of records securely considering their media and format, sensitivity and importance.
- Document the disposal process.

8.1 Responsibilities and authorities

Staffordshire County Council's [Corporate Records Management Policy](#) requires that records should only be retained for as long as they are needed for legal, regulatory or business needs. The period for retaining records is set out in departmental and [general corporate record retention schedules](#).

Business unit managers and team leaders should ensure that the retention policies are implemented in their respective business units and teams and that operational staff are aware of their requirements under the policies to retain and dispose of records. Inappropriate destruction in certain circumstances maybe a criminal offence.

Divergence from the schedules may be appropriate in certain circumstances. For example, a pending or actual legal action, change of legislation, regulation requiring longer retention, legitimate business need, such as a continuing need to retain record(s) for the conduct of day to day business, or the need for further constant reference refer to the record(s). Any divergence requires liaison with the [Information Governance Unit](#) and authorisation by the Head of Information Governance Unit, Director or Deputy Director.

If the change of circumstances needs to be reflected in changes to the corporate retention policy managers should inform the [Information Governance Unit](#). The Unit will assess the request and where necessary consult with other users of records and/or Legal Services. Changes to corporate policy will require authorisation in line with corporate information governance procedures.

Business unit managers and team leaders should develop and implement procedures to routinely weed through and identify records due for disposal.

Records should be arranged in a way that facilitates the identification of records due for disposal (see Arrangement). In addition records should be maintained in a way that records due for disposal are easier to identify.

Disposition authorities that govern the removal of records from operational systems should be applied to records on a systematic and routine basis, in the course of business activity. No disposition action should take place without the assurance that the record is no longer required, that no work is outstanding and that no litigation or investigation is current or pending which would involve relying on the record as evidence.

Records due for disposal should be reviewed by designated officers within your business unit.

8.2 Disposal procedures

Disposition action may encompass:

- Immediate destruction, including physical destruction, overwriting and deletion.
- Transfer to the Staffordshire County Council Archive Service. A small percentage of records that have reached the end of their retention period maybe required to be retained indefinitely. This might because the records are of historical value. (For further information see the Staffordshire County Council Archive Service [Acquisitions & Disposals Policy](#)).

The vast majority of records that have reached the end of their retention period will be destroyed unless they are of historical value or pertain to pending or actual litigation or investigation.

A destruction procedure should be established. Destruction should be conducted in a timely and secure manner with:

- Destruction authorised by a designated officer in line with established procedures and policies.
- An appropriately supervised destruction process.
- The preservation of the confidentiality of any information the records contain.
- All copies of the record authorised for destruction, including security copies, preservation copies and backup copies destroyed.
- Appropriate evidence of what has been destroyed.

Records that are transferred to be stored at the [Staffordshire County Council Record Centre](#) are destroyed on site by a specialist shredding company and a record is kept of destructions carried out on behalf of the business unit. Business unit managers and team leaders should take responsibility for the transfer of semi-current and inactive records to the [Staffordshire County Council Record Centre](#).

In some situations it may be acceptable for staff to destroy small volumes of paper records themselves. In these particular situations staff should shred records ensuring the above requirements are met and any shredded paper is put into confidential waste.

It should be noted that it is not impossible to recreate documents disposed of by shredding. The level of confidentiality and risk should be assessed. If records have high level security classification a finer grade of shredding or method of disintegration may be required.

If large volumes of records have not been transferred to the [Staffordshire County Council Record Centre](#) and require destruction it is recommended that specialist contractors are employed. The location and method of destruction should take into account the sensitivity of the records. Advice is available from the [Information Governance Unit](#) concerning both the method of destruction and details of companies carrying out record destruction.

Essentially the same principles govern the destruction of electronic records. However there are some issues that need to be taken in consideration when destroying electronic records. These include that:

- More than one copy of an electronic record may exist.
- Once authorisation to destroy the records has been obtained all copies are deleted.
- The ability to cross reference electronic records to their paper counterparts is important.
- The deletion of an electronic record is not the same as destroying a record. This is because electronic records may still be retrievable unless reformatting of media takes place.
- The media the records are held on may affect the destruction process and therefore should be taken into consideration.

It is recommended that staff consult the British Standard BS 8470 – 2006 Code of Practice for the secure destruction of confidential material for details concerning destruction of different media and records with different security classifications.

The disposal of ICT equipment should be in line with the Staffordshire County Council [ICT Disposal Policy](#).

An EDRMS should have assigned triggers which alert authorised officers of records due for destruction and will create and store a record recording the disposal of a record.

For both paper and electronic records disposed of from a windows folder system manual recording of the process will be necessary. The advantage of an EDRMS is that the system has the facility to log system actions comprising the disposal process.

Disposing of Records

What do we NEED to do?

Directors, Deputy Corporate Directors and the Head of Information Governance are responsible for:

- Authorising divergence from Staffordshire County Council records retention policy for legitimate reasons.

Designated officers and senior managers are responsible for:

- Formally assigning responsibilities for record disposal.
- Establishing procedures for the disposal of records in all media and formats.
- Ensuring ICT equipment is disposed of in line with the Staffordshire County Council [ICT Disposal Policy](#).

Business unit managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring:

- Record retention policies are implemented in their unit/team.
- Recordkeeping systems and arrangement of records enable identification of records due for disposal.
- Written procedures are in place for records disposal.
- Records due for disposal are reviewed to ensure they are no longer required.
- Divergence from records retention policy is authorised.
- The [Information Governance Unit](#) are notified of changes affecting records retention and disposal.
- Staff are aware of policies to retain and dispose of records.
- Staff dispose of records only in accordance with [Staffordshire County Council records retention policies](#).
- Records are disposed of appropriately considering their sensitivity, security classification and the media and format(s) in which they are held.
- ICT equipment is disposed of appropriately in line with Staffordshire County Council [ICT Disposal Policy](#).
- Records of potential historic interest or research value are identified and transferred with agreement to Staffordshire County Council Archive Service.
- Records are kept as evidence of disposal.

All staff are responsible for:

- Only disposing of records in accordance with Staffordshire County Council records retention policy.
- Seeing that divergence from retention policy is authorised.

Information legislation and standards

9.1 Legislation

Key legislation affecting the management of records includes:

- **Section 224** of the **Local Government Act 1972** requires local authorities to make proper arrangements for the care of their records.
- The **Limitation Act 1980**
- The **Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984**
- The **[Computer Misuse Act 1990 \(c. 18\)](#)** establishes that it is a crime to deliberately or recklessly introduce a computer virus. The Act identifies three specific offences:
 1. Unauthorised access to computer material (that is, a program or data).
 2. Unauthorised access to a computer system with intent to commit or facilitate the commission of a serious crime.
 3. Unauthorised modification of computer material.
- The **[Data Protection Act 1998](#)** requires records and data to be accurate and up to date, stored securely and kept for no longer than necessary. The County Council is required to identify and notify the Information Commissioner of records containing personal data and the purposes for which it is processed. The County Council must ensure information is accessible if it is to comply with subject access requests within 40 days. Further information on the Data Protection Act 1998 can be found on the [ICO – Information Commissioner's Office](#) website and the Staffordshire County Council [Data Protection and Freedom of Information Homepage](#).
- The **[Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)** requires information to be made available to the public (unless it is exempt from disclosure) within 20 working days of receiving a request. The Act also places a duty on the County Council to identify relevant information and assist enquirers in formulating their request. Further information on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can be found on the [ICO – Information Commissioner's Office](#) website and the Staffordshire County Council [Data Protection and Freedom of Information Homepage](#).
- The **[Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](#)** Part 1 (Chapter 2) Section 21 (4) (b) and (c), Section 22 (2) (b) allow a local authority to access certain types of communications data for the prevention and detection of crime or preventing disorder. The Act also lays down strict rules about how and what Staffordshire County Council can access.

- [Environmental Information Regulations 2004](#) oblige public authorities to make environmental information available on request on a range of matters including buildings, health and safety arrangements, policies, plans, programmes and economic data used in decision-making.

There are also additional guidance, policies and legislation specific to business functions and activities which affect recordkeeping.

9.2 Standards

[ISO 15489 -1](#) – 1:2001 Information and documentation – records management – part 1: general, International Standards Organisation.

[ISO 15489](#)/TR 15489 – 2:2001 Information and documentation – records management – part 2: guidelines, International Standards Organisation.

ISO/IEC 17799 - 2005 Information technology – code of practice for information security management, International Standards Organisation.

ISO 23801 pt 1 & 2 – 2004 Information and documentation – records management process – metadata for records, International Standards Organisation.

[e-Government Metadata Standard Version 3.1 - 2006](#).

9.3 Codes of practice

[The Lord Chancellor records management Code of Practice](#), Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

[ISO 15489](#) – 3:2003 Effective Records Management – part 3: Performance management.

BSI BIP 0008 Code of Practice for Legal Admissibility of Information Stored on Electronic Document Systems.

BIP 0009 Document management legal admissibility of Information Stored on Electronic Document Systems Compliance Workbook.

BIP 0010 The Principle of Good Practice for Information Management.

BIP 0016:2001 Guide to scanning business documents, British Standards Institution.

PD 0025 – 1:2002 Effective records management: a management guide to the value of BS [ISO 15489 -1](#), British Standards Institution.

PD 002 – 2:2002 Effective records management: practical implementation of BS [ISO 15489 -1](#), British Standards Institution.

BS 8470 – 2006 Code of Practice for the secure destruction of confidential material.

9.4 Staffordshire County Council policies & guidance

[Acquisitions & Disposals Policy](#)

[Business Classification Scheme](#)

[Clear Desk and Screen Policy Procedures](#)

Data Quality Policy

[EDRMS Configuration, Classification, Retention policy and Metadata Change and Development Procedures \(Roles and Responsibilities\)](#)

EDRMS Strategy

Electronic Archiving Policy

[Home working policy and guidelines \(Equipment provision and Security\)](#)

[ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[ICT Disposal Policy](#)

[Implementing Electronic Government Return 2006](#)

[Information Governance Framework](#)

[Information Security Policy](#)

[Managing your mailbox](#)

Migration of Electronic Records Policy

[Password Policy](#)

[Policy for the Disposal of Computer Equipment](#)

[Publications Scheme](#)

Retention Policy

[Contractual](#) records

[Finance](#) records

[Health & Safety](#) records

[Personnel](#) records

[Service specific retention policies](#)

[Records Management Policy](#)

[Records Management Guidance sheets](#)

Records Management Manual

[Risk Management Policy](#)

Scanning Policy

[Standards of Record Storage](#)

10 Glossary

- **Access** – right, opportunity means of finding, using or retrieving information.
- **Accountability** – principle that individuals, organisations and the community are responsible for their actions and may be required to explain them to others.
- **Activities** – are the things Staffordshire County Council does to carry out its functions (**See Functions**).
- **Business Classification Scheme** - is based on the analysis of functions, processes and activities. It documents the structure of a records management system and the relationships between records and the activities that generate them. It provides an essential basis for the intellectual control of records and facilitates their management and use over time. A business classification scheme, which is a requirement of BS ISO 15489, can be used to ensure that all records are stored consistently, regardless of their format and also underpins the Electronic Document and Records Management System (**See EDRMS**).
- **Business recovery plan** - the written policies and procedures that are in place to prevent, minimize, and/or recover from damage to records.
- **Capture** - refers to the actions that are taken to secure a record into an effective records management system, where the record can be maintained and made accessible for as long as it is needed.
- **Classification** - systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules represented in a Business Classification Scheme (**See Business Classification Scheme**).
- **Context** - a record must be supported by information about the circumstances in which it was created and used. Records cannot be fully understood without adequate knowledge of the activity that gave rise to them, the wider function of which the activity forms part, and administrative context, including the identities and roles of the various participants in the activity. Contextual information must therefore be captured in the records themselves or in the systems that are used to maintain them.
- **Creation** - refers to the creation of a record in a business activity.
- **Destruction** – a process of eliminating or deleting, beyond any possible reconstruction.

- **Document** – recorded information or object which can be treated as a unit.
- **Disposition** - range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions which are documented in disposition authorities or other instructions.
- **EDRMS** - electronic document and records management system; a dedicated system to capturing records. It supports the capture, registration, storage and indexing, ownership and access rights, retrieval, checkout and return of documents and records.
- **Evidential value** - the usefulness of records as the primary or legal evidence of an organisation's authority, functions, operations, transactions, and basic decisions and procedures.
- **File plan** - list of files and their titles.
- **Filing**- the process of sorting and arranging, classifying or categorizing, and storing records so that they may be retrieved when needed.
- **Functions** – are the things an organisation has to do to achieve its corporate goals and strategies.
- **Life-Cycle** - a theory that proposes that a record has a life-cycle similar to that of a biological organism; they are born live through their youth and old age and then die.
- **Metadata** - data describing context, content and structure of records and their management through time.
- **Migration** – Act of moving records from one system to another, while maintaining the records' authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability.
- **Preservation** - processes and operations involved in ensuring the technical and intellectual survival of authentic records through time.
- **Process mapping** - a method for depicting a process, material or information flow in a diagrammatic form. Defines key process input and outputs.
- **Record** - any recorded evidence of an activity.
- **Recordkeeping system** - Information system which captures, manages and provides access to records through time.

- **Records management** - 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 of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.
- **Records series** - a group of related records or documents that are normally used and filed as a unit because they result from the same activity or function or have some relationship arising from their creation, receipt, etc.; and that permit evaluation as a unit for retention scheduling purposes.
- **Retention period** - the length of time a Business Unit must keep particular records. This is usually expressed in terms of years, months, days and may be contingent upon an event or specification.
- **Retention schedule** - documents how long records are retained for, how and where they should be stored and what action needs to be taken once the record reaches its retention date.
- **Retrieval** - the process of locating and withdrawing records and delivering them for use.
- **Tracking** – creating, capturing and maintaining information about the movement and use of records.
- **Transfer** – (custody) change of custody, ownership and/or responsibilities for records.
- **Transfer** - (movement) moving records from one location to another.
- **Version control** – the management of multiple revisions to the same document. Version control enables us to tell one version of a document from another.

Records Management Compliance Checklist



1 Records management responsibilities

1.1	Does your directorate have a written records management policy?	
1.2	Is your directorate records management policy periodically reviewed by Directors and Directorate Information Managers?	
1.3	Are there written records management policies and procedures for the service / business unit?	
1.4	Are operational policies and procedures regularly reviewed?	
1.5	Are staff aware of the policies and standards in Staffordshire County Council's Information Governance Framework?	
1.6	Are staff aware of their responsibilities under service/business unit/team policies and procedures?	
1.7	Has a senior officer been assigned responsibility for implementation of Staffordshire County Council records management policies?	
1.8	Have responsibilities for managing records been assigned at service/business unit?	
1.9	Have responsibilities for managing records been assigned at service/business unit?	
1.10	Are designated staff aware of their records management responsibilities and authorities?	
1.11	Do officers with specific records management responsibilities have adequate records management knowledge and skills?	
1.12	Have staff received appropriate training to perform assigned records management duties?	
1.13	Is compliance with recordkeeping policies and procedures monitored?	



2 Creating records

2.1	Have records required to support and evidence business activities been identified?	
2.2	Are there written procedures in place to ensure full and accurate records are created to support and evidence business activities?	
2.3	Do these procedures take into account legislative and regulatory requirements, guidelines and codes of practice?	
2.4	Are staff aware of their responsibilities to create records to document business activities and decision-making processes?	
2.5	Do staff normally follow procedures and create records required?	
2.6	Is compliance with recordkeeping procedures for creating records monitored?	
2.7	Are unnecessary duplicate copies of records and information created?	
2.8	Are proper document templates created and consistently used?	
2.9	Are the rights to create and edit templates controlled?	



3 Capturing records

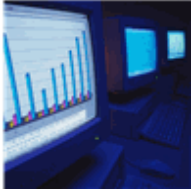
3.1	Are there service-wide recordkeeping systems for the management of records in all media and formats based on the Staffordshire County Council Business Classification Scheme?	
3.2	Is the system reviewed and changed to continue to meet business needs?	
3.3	Is scanning carried out with reference to appropriate standards?	
3.4	Are emails managed in accordance with Staffordshire County Council guidelines?	
3.5	Do all staff have access to capture records into shared recordkeeping systems?	
3.6	Are there written procedures in place for capturing records into record keeping systems?	
3.7	Are staff aware of policies, standards and procedures and their responsibilities to capture records?	
3.8	Are records (irrespective of media or format) captured into a shared recordkeeping system in accordance with policies, standards and procedures?	
3.9	Are the same rules applied to the management of both paper and electronic records?	
3.10	Are records captured into personal filing systems?	
3.11	Are evidential emails captured and maintained in a shared recordkeeping system?	
3.12	Are records arranged in a logical filing system based on the functions and activities of the unit?	
3.13	Is appropriate information (metadata) associated with records to help interpret, retrieve and manage records?	
3.14	Are documents and records clearly and consistently titled and identifiable?	



4 Storing & maintaining records

4.1	Are there written procedures for storing and maintaining records to ensure that all records are retrievable, useable, can be interpreted, and proved to be reliable and have integrity for as long as they are required irrespective of media and format?	
4.2	Have digital preservation strategies been developed to ensure electronic records remain accessible, readable and useable for as long as they are required?	
4.3	Are business recovery plans in place to ensure business continuity in the event of an emergency/disaster situation?	
4.4	Are staff aware of and follow procedures for storing and maintaining records?	
4.5	Are records stored and maintained in accessible and secure recordkeeping systems?	
4.6	Are records stored in appropriate conditions to ensure they remain accessible and useable for as long as they are required?	
4.7	Are records managed in a way that ensures they are authentic, reliable and have integrity?	
4.8	Are paper records stored in appropriate locations and filing equipment?	
4.9	Do storage conditions for semi-current and inactive records comply with the Staffordshire County Council Standards for Record Storage ?	
4.10	Are electronic records maintained in a shared system on the Staffordshire County Council IT network?	
4.11	Have access rights and security levels been assigned to recordkeeping systems, records and individuals?	
4.12	Is the ability to view, amend and delete records controlled and actions recorded?	
4.13	Is information and ICT systems kept secure in line with Staffordshire County Council ICT Information Security Policy and Staffordshire County Council Clear Desk and Screen Policy ?	

4.14	Have vital and key business records been identified?	
4.15	Are vital and key business records managed in accordance with their sensitivity and importance?	
4.16	Do staff ensure records and information are kept appropriately secure considering their sensitivity and importance?	
4.17	Is the movement and use of records tracked?	
4.18	Do staff use systems for tracking the movement and use of records?	
4.19	Are there documented version control rules in place?	
4.20	Do staff consistently apply version control rules?	



5 Retaining records

5.1	Are records in maintained in systems that enable records retention to be implemented in all media and formats?	
5.2	Do you provide the Information Governance Unit with information to assist in the development and maintenance of records retention policies?	
5.3	Are record retention policies affecting the functions and activities for which you are responsible reviewed annually?	
5.4	Do you inform Information Governance Unit of changes to legislation, regulations, guidelines, codes of practice, change of responsibilities of Staffordshire County Council for carrying out functions and activities, or business needs?	
5.5	Do recordkeeping systems and arrangement of records enable retention to be applied?	
5.6	Are staff aware of Staffordshire County Council records retention policies and the need to retain records in accordance with these policies	
5.7	Are records retained in accordance with Staffordshire County Council retention policies?	



6 Disposing of records

6.1	Have responsibilities for authorising records disposal been assigned?	
6.2	Are there written procedures in place for records disposal?	
6.3	Are there procedures in place for the disposal of records in all media and formats?	
6.4	Are staff aware of disposal policies and procedures?	
6.5	Is ICT equipment disposed of in line with Staffordshire County Council Policy for the Disposal of Computer Equipment?	
6.6	Are records disposed of in accordance with Staffordshire County Council records retention policies?	
6.7	Are all copies of the records (irrespective of media or format) identified and destroyed (including security copies, preservation copies and backup copies)?	
6.8	Do recordkeeping systems and arrangement of records facilitate the identification of records due for disposal?	
6.9	Are records due for disposal reviewed authorised by officers with designated authority to ensure they are no longer required?	
6.10	Do staff only dispose of records in accordance with Staffordshire County Council record retention policies?	
6.11	If any divergence from retention policy authorised by a Directory, Deputy Corporate Director or the Head of Information Governance?	
6.12	Is the Information Governance Unit notified of changes affecting records retention and disposal?	
6.13	Are records disposed of appropriately considering their sensitivity, security classification and the media and format in which they are held?	
6.14	Have records of potential historic interest or research value been identified?	

6.15	Are records of historic interest or research value transferred (by agreement) to the Staffordshire Archive Service?	
6.16	Are records kept as evidence of disposal?	