

APPENDIX A

Business Transformation Department

SHARED INFORMATION AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2010 - 2015



Bromsgrove
District Council
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Table of Contents

1 Introduction	4
1.1 Aims and Objectives.....	4
1.2 Core Principles of Information Management.....	4
2. Management and Resourcing	5
2.1 Sponsorship and Oversight	5
2.2 User Responsibility and Accountability	5
2.2.1 Joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group	6
2.2.2 Information Liaison Officers	7
2.2.3 Involvement from Teams	7
3. Local Context.....	7
3.1 Links to other Initiatives	8
4 Legal Obligations	9
4.1 Information Governance	9
4.2 Supporting Compliance in other Areas	9
5 Efficiencies.....	9
6. Information Systems Infrastructure.....	10
6.1 Internet and Intranet (ORB).....	10
6.2 Middleware and Integration	10
6.3 Handling Information Requests	11
7. Implementing the Strategy	11
7.1 Corporate Implementation	11
7.2 Individual Services Implementation	12
7.3 Implementation Support	12
8 Monitoring and Review.....	13
9 Risk Assessment	13
10 Equality & Diversity	13
Glossary.....	14
Appendices	16

1 Introduction

This document sets out an overarching framework for implementing information and records management initiatives at both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. The strategy gives a corporate approach to information and records management to improve the quality, availability and effective use of information and records throughout the two authorities. This will enable overall coordination of all information and records management and ensure alignment with the Councils' business strategies.

The Information and Records Management strategy itself is based on a vision and set of information management principles developed and approved by the County wide and regional Information Management network groups. It is supported by an action plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually.

This strategy will be supported by additional documents such as action plans, guidance notes, flowcharts, and process and procedure documents. This will allow for continuous review and updating of discrete elements of the strategy.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this strategy is to outline a wide range of activities that will deliver on the key aspects of the management of information within both councils and cover information of all types, regardless of format or media.

When devising this strategy, it was important to look at the ways in which the councils currently store and use information, and to consult the output from the information audits conducted in 2006/7

1.2 Core Principles of Information Management

The following set of principles were developed and approved by the Worcestershire Information Management Task Group and wider regional Information Management networks to underpin good information management and provide the focus of this strategy.

- The organisation will work towards an embedded culture that uses and promotes good information management practices
- Information will be managed as a corporate resource to support the operations and decision making process and will be managed throughout its lifecycle to ensure its quality and integrity.
- Information management systems must enhance effectiveness, efficiency and the customer experience.
- Information will be structured to facilitate information and knowledge sharing across the organisation and with other partner organisations
- The creation, storage and use of information will conform to legal and regulatory requirements as well as any guidelines and policies
- Where it is feasible, information will be captured and stored only once and reused as many times as is needed. It may be duplicated provided there is a single authoritative source and measures are in place to ensure consistency

- Access to the information will be as open as possible, subject to any security and legal restrictions
- Electronic storage and transmission is the preferred method of managing information
- Information management will be used to improve the capture and use of knowledge across the organisation
- Information will be managed in a secure way, ensuring the continuity of operations, and minimising the possibility of damage to service provision by limiting the impact of security threats or incidents.
- Information will be managed in a systematic way in accordance with the council's retention and disposal schedule
- Knowledge will be captured and re-used as a matter of process and procedure so that it can be shared across the organisation and with partners

2. Management and Resourcing

2.1 Sponsorship and Oversight

This strategy will be sponsored by the Head of Business Transformation and Portfolio Holders.

For this Strategy to be successful:

- Information and Records Management must be accepted as an integral part of the Councils' business planning and a strategic view applied across the organisation.
- There must be a commitment to develop the right skills and capabilities for all employees
- There must be a real partnership between all those utilising information
- Ensure cost effective capture and maintenance of relevant data
- The risks associated with information management should be properly managed.
- The value of efficient management of information should be measured.
- The culture of information sharing and ongoing learning should become embedded in the Authorities at all levels.

2.2 User Responsibility and Accountability

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) has overall responsibility for implementation of this strategy. However, the corporate nature, scale and scope of the proposals will require the involvement of various stakeholders throughout implementation.

Effective Information Management cannot be acquired through technology alone. It requires people adopting good practice and building appropriate processes, to allow information and knowledge sharing.

Information Management relates to the storage and use of the physical resource and Knowledge Management relates to people, what they know, how they learn and how they share information and knowledge.

Information and Knowledge Management is explained in the table below:

Data	<i>As an organisation we have many processes which generate data, which we gather together and organise for its subsequent use.</i>
	↓
Information	<i>Data is transformed into information through appropriate dissemination and interpretation.</i>
	↓
Knowledge	<i>Information from both within and outside the organisation, when used appropriately, assists in knowledge generation and decision making processes.</i>
	↓
Learning	<i>If successful, this process of turning data into information and knowledge is how our Councils can accumulate learning, move forward and deliver the improvements we need to make.</i>

2.2.1 Joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group

A joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group will be formed to support the communication and implementation of this strategy with the specific purpose of:

- Identifying and defining records management responsibilities
- promoting best practice and standards on information management
- assisting in the communication of corporate file plan, naming and classification standards
- monitoring information performance measures
- identifying training needs
- providing additional support to services

This group will also have a critical role to play in developing an information management culture and embedding the new policies, procedures and working practices by acting as the focus for good practice and support within the service areas.

The joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group will report progress and any significant issues identified that may cause any major changes to

the scope of work, additional investment requirements and consideration of business cases to the Business Development Manager, who can take issues forward to CMT where appropriate.

2.2.2 Information Liaison Officers

Information Liaison Officers (ILOs) will need to be identified within each service, with assigned roles and responsibilities for managing information and records.

- ILOs will be nominated for each service area.
- ILOs to receive specific records management training, to include: use of the Retention and Disposal schedule, naming conventions and document history pages. Records and e-records management advice and guidance for ILOs will be created, maintained and updated on the ORB by the Business Development Team in the form of FAQs.
- ILOs have responsibility for individual service systems and the quality of data processed within systems
- ILOs to ensure all new members of staff, through the appropriate induction procedures, receive initial basic procedural training
- ILOs to ensure staff understand and conform to records management procedures and policies which are available on the Information Management pages on The ORB
- ILOs to inform Business Development Team of any Health and Safety issues relating to records maintenance and storage
- ILOs to communicate changes in Information Management policies, procedures and good practice to staff in their service teams.

2.2.3 Involvement from Teams

The Business Development Team will work with teams in all services to roll out this strategy. There will be a project plan to support this work. Teams will be expected to complete agreed actions within a specified timeframe to implement and embed the improvements.

3. Local Context

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils are in a period of change. The following are currently being engaged:

- Shared service arrangements between Bromsgrove and Redditch councils.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Service, hosted by Bromsgrove.
- A Transformation Programme.
- Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier developed by Worcestershire County Council.

This strategy will support the information needs of teams involved in restructuring, relocation and change programmes. Areas of support will include:

- Accommodation resource and efficient use of office space
- Data transfer, merging and cleansing
- Secure disposal

The support work will be based on need – it can be included in the project plan or on an ad hoc basis.

3.1 Links to other Initiatives

This strategy also recognised that there are strong linkages and dependencies between this strategy and other initiatives in the following areas:

- The need to develop, implement, support and maintain an ICT infrastructure to ensure staff, members, the public and where necessary partnership organisations have quick and ready access to the information they require
- The adoption of common standards that are essential for effective information retrieval, both on the internet, intranet and other internal networks
- Ensuring that land and property information remains corporately managed – putting the Local Land and Property Gazetteer at the centre of all property based data
- To promote the use of the ORB as a resource for team information and document store
- Encouraging improved web contact by making as much information as possible freely available and accessible by the public while remaining compliant with legislation.
- The need to work towards the use of common identifiers, in particular for customers and properties, to enable matching of records that are held in disparate information systems
- The need for information security to protect information from a wide range of threats in order to ensure business continuity, minimise business damage and maximise value and business opportunities

Equally these priorities and the Information and Records Management Strategy are central to achieving the objectives formulated in other key Council documents including:

- Corporate Plan
- Joint ICT Transformation Strategy
- Corporate Equality Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- HR Policies and competency frameworks
- Corporate Risk Register
- Service Business Plans

- Climate Change Strategy
- Data Quality Strategy
- Corporate Performance Framework

4 Legal Obligations

4.1 Information Governance

The following legislation governs the information that we process as a Local Authority:

- The Data Protection Act - sets out eight principles governing personal information about data subjects
- Freedom of Information Act - gives a general right of access to the information that we hold as a public authority
- Environmental Information Regulations - gives a right of access to information concerning the environment and elements
- Reuse of Public Sector Information - the public have the right to request to re-use the information that we hold

The legislation gives the person rights of access to information that we hold and sets timescales by which a response must be made. If the authorities are to meet the timescales, information must be managed proactively.

4.2 Supporting Compliance in other Areas

The implementation of good information management will underpin service delivery and compliance to legislation that governs other service delivery.

5 Efficiencies

The aim of this strategy is to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of council services through improved information management. These improvements include:

- Reduce storage requirements
- Save energy and paper
- Improve data quality
- Information available at one point of access
- Increased speed of access to information

Objectives are to standardise the use of information to improve performance and reporting processes and reduce costs. There will be ongoing monitoring and reporting of space saving and service efficiency.

Metrics will be captured to and used to benchmark how the Councils are managing information and measure the effectiveness of improvements. File duplication across services can be identified by running a software application.

More efficient methods of storing physical records will maximise office space and lead to a better working environment.

6. Information Systems Infrastructure

6.1 Internet and Intranet (ORB)

Information posted on the websites is readily available to the public on our websites. Services will review their web pages to ensure information is up to date and available.

The Orb has been developed to provide an information portal across both authorities. During the next phase of the development, services use the Orb as a file store for their working files. The ORB will replace the existing method of file storage on traditional drives.

6.2 Middleware and Integration

Microsoft's BizTalk and Visual Studio.Net framework are proposed as the middleware and integration solutions, which are based on open, industry standard Extensible Mark-up Language (XML) interfaces using technology that is flexible, modern and relatively cheap to implement.

Middleware is a communication layer that allows applications to interact, share and exchange information between different systems, similar to a 'black-box' that passes information between front-end systems, such as Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) or the Web, to back office systems such as Planning, Benefits, Environmental Health etc.

It is recognised that not all opportunities for integration will be taken advantage of, for example due to limited budget, availability of application support etc., and in these cases the Authority will make use of products such as Smartpoint.

Any middleware or integration will be primarily used to support the CRM development, the Web and the Intranet development projects.

Key benefits to be obtained from the introduction of middleware:

- Improved quality of Council services achieved by integrating existing disparate systems
- Providing a consistent message to customers and system users
- Within the CRM providing a single up-to-date view of customer information (by bringing together back office information)
- Improved partnership working by enabling different service providers to share information
- Removal of data duplication and an improvement in data standards, retention and usage
- Generation of efficiencies – as listed above.

The use of an enterprise middleware environment can address identified issues with current working practices and information sharing, these include:

- Legacy issues – information held in silos
- Cultural issues – resistance to change
- Technical issues – incompatible proprietary systems and dependency on third party suppliers
- Ownership issues– who is responsible for the information?
- Data issues - poor quality of existing data

Each service team's information ownership, management and work processes need to be mapped and reviewed to ensure a suitable middleware solution is applied to include back office systems. If a requirement for middleware architecture is identified, it will develop as part of the implementation process.

6.3 Handling Information Requests

The existing Customer Feedback system used by Bromsgrove Council will be upgraded to include a module to facilitate the handling of requests for information and record responses for both authorities including Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

7. Implementing the Strategy

Our approach to implementation is based around building an information management culture and introducing good information management practices and procedures that should start to deliver clear benefits in improved efficiencies and savings.

7.1 Corporate Implementation

Practical implementation is underpinned by action and project plans. It is an interactive process which will be reinforced by constantly consulting and involving all levels of the organisation.

- There will be a joint Information and Records Management Working Group
- Information Liaison Officers will be identified within each service.
- To ensure the embedding of this new culture, Information management will become an intrinsic part of all job requirements within the Authority.
- Develop a register of Policies and Strategies devised from corporate consultations, service consultations, relevant legislation, and the lists of Policies and Strategies,
- Information sharing protocols will form part of agreements with partner organisations
- The ORB will become pivotal as a business tool to assist roll out

There are already tools and guidance published on the ORB, to help staff start the process of organising and storing their information and records according to corporate requirements. Further tools will be developed and maintained and these may be service specific.

Any changes and additions to the above documents will be communicated to all staff and details will be made available via the ORB.

The implementation of this strategy will allow consistent and accurate information to be available for public access.

Technical forums and social networking will be investigated for making information available with increased accessibility.

There will be a trial implementations and the action plan and checklists will be amended to take account of learning gained. Following reviews, monitoring and assessment there will be a systematic roll out to each individual service.

7.2 Individual Services Implementation

To have a comprehensive and functional information and records management system, each department will have an implementation plan aimed at their specific needs. This will be led by the Business Development team and the service 'Information Liaison Officer' using shared project management framework.

The Implementation Plan will include the following actions:

- Identify all types of information held, where and how it is stored (paper, electronic, email, CD, microfiche, EDMS, databases)
- Data cleansing
- Identify information that is or should be in the public domain
- Identify ownership responsibility and location of information
- Implement the retention and disposal policy
- Deliver the Corporate file plan and related guidance
- Identify work processes to aid design for functional part of the file hierarchy
- Advise on best practice for use, storage and retention of email
- Review work processes to incorporate records requirements
- Regular monitoring by ILOs and auditing by the Business Development Team
- Identify where the Geographical Information is used as a resource

7.3 Implementation Support

Overall support and guidance will be provided by the Business Development team and the appointed ILOs within each service team. This will be ongoing to ensure that the Information and Records Management system is maintained and utilised in accordance with this strategy.

All new staff will receive training on their responsibilities for information legislation compliance followed by routine training updates.

Information and records management will also form an intrinsic part of their on the job training. There is Information and Records Management guidance available on the intranet.

8 Monitoring and Review

As the implementation rolls out across the two authorities, metrics will be captured to measure the effectiveness of the actions included within this Strategy.

These metrics will be reported to the Joint Information and Records Management Group and used to benchmark how the Authority is managing its information and that the improvements and outcomes are being delivered.

9 Risk Assessment

Any risks associated with this strategy will be identified and included in the corporate risk registers.

10 Equality & Diversity

In order to ensure that our information and communication technology systems are delivering our equality and diversity needs in terms of service delivery and monitoring of information, it is essential that any project gives adequate consideration to customer access issues when scoping or developing the project.

The Council will seek to make reasonable adjustments to standard ICT services and facilities offered to its customers and employees where there is an identified need to enable access to our services or carry out their duties as effectively as possible.

Glossary

Information

Whenever the term 'information' is used in this strategy it is used to define any information used by the Councils whether stored in electronic form, on paper or any other media.

Intranet (The ORB)

The ORB will be a vital tool in the implementation and use of the new Information and Records Management Strategy. Information on the ORB will hold the most up to date information available for all to see without duplicating any documentation. The intranet will be a place all staff log onto regularly to search for information as well as receive updates and news. Each service will update the content of their area.

Internet (The web)

The website will be a vital tool for services to make available information for public access.

Corporate Fileplan

The corporate file plan is intended to make information easy to access by all staff and Members, eliminate the need for duplication of information and ensure that all the information that is held by the council complies with the relevant legislation.

The file plan consists of three main folders, Corporate, Corporate Working Groups and Services. The corporate folder will contain information such as policies, procedures, standards, practices as well as all information that is available to the public. By having all this information in one place it eliminates the need for individuals to save their own copy locally, it eliminates the need to email large documents and it allows for an easy assessment of the corporate documentation held by the council.

The Corporate Working Groups pages provide a platform for larger, cross departmental working. Information on these pages is then stored centrally, again eliminating the need to duplicate or email, it is easy to set the permissions and access to the folders and ensures that no part of the project gets lost.

The service pages and folders are dedicated for each service. When initially set up there will be generic folder structures, however these can be adapted and updated following consultation with the service. The generic file structure allows staff to see that there is a place for documentation and there is a system to storing it. This will reduce the instances of 'lost' documentation, as well as duplication of documentation and will assist in information sharing within the service.

Although the filing systems have been designed to be intuitive to use, there are guidance notes and flow charts available on the ORB to help staff in the decision making process when saving documents. Eventually the flow charts will no longer be needed, however initially they will help ensure that all staff understand the file system.

Retention and Disposal Schedule

The retention and disposal schedules provide a list of record classes, the retention period and the authority for retention. The retention period may be specified in legislation, by government guidelines, an audit requirement or there may be a business need for keeping the record.

The retention and disposal schedule will allow all staff within the council to know when documents should be disposed of.

Duplication and Folder Analysis

A series of duplication identification scans will run on all the council's servers. These scans will pick up on information that is either identical or very similar and stored in multiple locations.

Part of the implementation process will be getting staff in each department to migrate their own files to the new file structure, including putting things forward that should be saved in the corporate file.

Once this has been completed by each department, a whole system scan can be run. This should show no duplications due to the new system of centrally storing information.

Policies and Strategies Table

The table lists policies, strategies and standard documents in use by the councils and its partners. Information on current version, date written, review dates, ownership and audience is included.

Services are responsible for keeping their documentation and the policies and strategies table up to date and any changes to documents or additions need to be recorded in this table.

Standard Naming Conventions

Standard Naming Conventions are a set of rules designed to help and advise people when naming documents and files. These conventions are designed to ensure documents and files are named in such a way that the names are meaningful, sensible and not too large. The ultimate aim is that anyone looking for a document they do not know the name of should be able to find it quickly. The Standard Naming Conventions are available on the ORB.

Document History Page

The inclusion of document history will provide summary information about the document including purpose, ownership, version history and review timescales.

There are guidance notes available on the intranet.

Appendices

Reference Documents

External Documents

- Local Government Act 1972
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Re-use of Public Sector Information
- Environmental Information Regulations
- ISO 15489

BDC and RBC Documents

- Corporate Plan
- Redditch Community Strategy
- Corporate Equality Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Corporate Performance Framework
- Asset Management Plan
- Capital Strategy
- Directorates Service Delivery Plans
- Transformation Programme Plan
- HR Policies and competency frameworks
- Corporate Risk Register
- Climate Change Strategy (2009/10)

A number of related policies and procedures are also in existence. These include:-

- Internet and Email Policy
- Information Security Policy
- I. C. T. Equipment Use and Security Policy
- Policies and Strategies Table
- Retention and Disposal Schedule

- Standard Naming Conventions
- Document History Page
- Information and Records Management Guidance Notes
- Corporate File Plans
- Guidance on use of file plan
- Flow Charts
- Records management policy
- Email usage