

**MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**



**Report of:** Director of Legal and Governance Services, Charlotte Benjamin

**Relevant Executive Member:** The Mayor, Chris Cooke

**Submitted to:** Single Member Executive - The Mayor

**Date:** 17 July 2025

**Title:** Records Management Policy

**Report for:** Decision

**Status:** Public

**Strategic priority:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Why:** Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision

**Subject to call in?:** Yes

**Why:** Non-urgent report

**Proposed decision(s)**

That the Mayor approves the Records Management Policy and Corporate Retention Schedule Refresh attached at Appendix 1.

**Executive summary**

The report seeks approval for proposed revisions to the Council's Records Management policy and retention schedule following their scheduled triennial review to ensure continued delivery of the Council's Information Strategy and its alignment with the statutory Code of Practice on the management of records which sits within the Council's Information Governance Policy Framework. The report provides the rules and guidance necessary to appropriately safeguard our corporate information to ensure it is secure, complete, managed effectively and appropriately accessible.

The decision requires Single Member Executive approval as it is a 'minor variation to an existing policy or procedure' as per Section 6.38.2(a) of the constitution.

**1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions**

1.1 This report presents and seeks approval of the proposed revisions to the Council’s Records Management Policy and Retention Schedule following their schedules triennial review in order to ensure our continued compliance with the statutory Code of Practice on the management of records and sits within the Council’s Information Governance Policy Framework.

<b>Our ambitions</b>	<b>Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims</b>
<b>A successful and ambitious town</b>	Implementation and adherence to a Records Management Policy, however compliance with the principles of the policy will ensure that the Council’s records vital to delivery of services that are needed to achieve the Council’s ambitions in these areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• secure</li><li>• complete</li><li>• managed effectively</li><li>• appropriately accessible.</li></ul>
<b>A healthy Place</b>	
<b>Safe and resilient communities</b>	
<b>Delivering best value</b>	Aim for successful adherence to the Policy in order to ensure robust and effective corporate governance.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the Mayor approves the triennial review of the Corporate Records Management policy and the Corporate Retention Schedule attached at Appendix 1.

**3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)**

3.1 Consideration of policy is required to ensure compliance with our statutory responsibilities which will ensure the right information will be available to the right users, at any time, accessible and used ethically to support achievement of the Council Plan Ambitions.

3.2 Managing Records effectively will support delivery of the Council’s emerging Digital Strategy.

**4. Background and relevant information**

4.1 The increasing reliance on electronic records, with more information being created and received digitally, has added a new dimension to the challenges that Middlesbrough Council faces. The growth of digital technology has provided different ways for us to communicate and share information which makes information and records management even more complex.

4.2 The Council is in the process of implementing a new corporate storage platform which will ensure structure, consistency and security for our records. Its Policy and Retention

schedules will determine how our information is structures and how long information is held for in line with retention legislation.

4.3 The Policy will underpin and ensure:

- that, where and when required, authoritative information about its past activities can be found and used for current business (corporate memory)
- the Council can demonstrate compliance with its legal duties and respond to public information requests more efficiently
- become more transparent, proactively and routinely publish data of public interest; and
- achieve a more effective use of resources, through the ongoing digitisation of records and the correct implementation of the corporate Records Retention Schedule.

4.4 Furthermore, effective records management will also help the Council mitigate the following risks:

- loss of records vital to effective operations.
- taking poor decisions based on inadequate or incomplete records.
- failure to handle personal or confidential information with the required level of security.
- criticisms or sanctions from the Information Commissioner for non-compliance; and
- financial losses due to the lack of reliable evidence or incurring unnecessary costs for data storage.

4.5 The Policy and Schedule are reviewed every three years unless there are changes to legislation in the intervening period that would require an earlier review.

**5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate**

5.1 This is not applicable to this decision. The Records Management Policy forms part of the suite of policies put in place as part of the Information Governance Framework and does not directly impact on any Ward.

**6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended**

6.1 The Council could choose not to adopt corporate policies on records management, however statutory duties would remain in place and in the absence of a standard approach there would be an increased risk of making decisions that fail to meet those legal duties. Given these duties are in place this option is not recommended.

**7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Costs associated with scanning will be assessed following a successful approval of a business case. Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Legal	The policy will continue to ensure that the Council conducts its business and decision making in line with the requirements of statutory duty around the retention of information.
Risk	Approval of the policies will positively impact on risks within the Council's risk registers, primarily the risk that the Council fails to comply with the law.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There is no impact associated with the proposed policy within this area.
Reducing Poverty	There is no impact associated with the proposed policy within this area.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no climate or environmental impacts associated with the proposed policy
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no direct implications arising from this Policy on this group
Data Protection	This policy aims to protect individual rights against the legislation in relation to their protected characteristics

**Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)**

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Publication of the policy on the MBC Website and Intranet pages	P Jemwa, Records Manager	July 2025

**Appendices**

1	Records Management Policy and Corporate Retention Schedule
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**Background papers**

Not applicable.

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