

Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board



Records Management Policy RVJB.RM.01

Title	Records Management Policy
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Approved By	Management Team
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Reviewer	Assistant Assessor
Review Date	As required

Review History

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Statement by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer	3
1. General	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Scope	5
3. What is Records Management?	5 – 6
4. Why is Records Management Important?	6
5. Policy Statement and Commitment	6 – 7
6. Roles and Responsibilities	7 - 8
7. Legislation	8
8. Relation to other RVJB Policies	8
9. Training	9
10. Monitoring and Review	9

Statement by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

It is the aim of Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board to achieve efficiency benefits through best practice applied to records management. This is intended to lead to improvements in the use of personnel and financial resources.

Best Practice in records management will ensure that all information:

- 1. Received or created is stored in the appropriate way and easily retrievable.*
- 2. It is retained, destroyed or preserved in accordance with the Board's Retention and Disposal Arrangements.*
- 3. Meets our current needs and our requirements into the foreseeable future.*
- 4. Is capable of enabling change when required.*
- 5. Is easily accessible to users and that the skills and technology are available to achieve this aim.*

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 emphasises the importance placed on records management in local authorities. It is our aim to draft and implement an effective Records Management Plan in order to meet the requirements of the Act. The Plan will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure its effectiveness.



Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

Date: 18th October 2021

1. General

- 1.1 The Assessor, on behalf of Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board (RVJB), carries out the functions of valuation of Non-Domestic properties for the purposes of the Valuation Roll; the banding of dwellings for the purposes of the Council Tax List and the Electoral Registration function for the three constituent local authorities.
- 1.2 RVJB recognises that the effective management of its records, regardless of format, is essential in order to support its core functions, to comply with legal, statutory and regulatory obligations, and to demonstrate transparency and accountability to all its stakeholders.
- 1.3 Records are a vital information asset and a valuable resource for the organisation's decision-making processes, policy creation and operations, and must be managed effectively from the point of their creation until their ultimate disposal.
- 1.4 RVJB is committed to managing its records in line with the following principles of good records management as defined by the National Records of Scotland:
 - **Authentic** - It must be possible to prove that records are what they purport to be and who created them, by keeping a record of their management through time. Where information is later added to an existing document within a record, the added information must be signed and dated. With electronic records, changes and additions must be identifiable through audit trails.
 - **Accurate** - Records must accurately reflect the transactions that they document.
 - **Accessible** - Records must be readily available when needed.
 - **Complete** - Records must be sufficient in content, context and structure to reconstruct the relevant activities and transactions that they document.
 - **Comprehensive** - Records must document the complete range of an organisation's business.
 - **Compliant** - Records must comply with any record keeping requirements resulting from legislation, audit rules and other relevant regulations.
 - **Effective** - Records must be maintained for specific purposes and the information contained in them must meet those purposes. Records will be identified and linked to the business process to which they are related.
 - **Secure** - Records must be securely maintained to prevent unauthorised access, alteration, damage or removal. They must be stored in a secure environment, the degree of security reflecting the sensitivity and importance of the contents. Where records are migrated across changes in technology, the evidence preserved must remain authentic and accurate.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the importance of managing records effectively within RVJB, to outline key aims and objectives in relation to recordkeeping, and to act as a mandate for the support and delivery of records management policies, procedures and initiatives across RVJB. This policy should be read together with the RVJB Records Management Plan.
- 2.4 The policy is to be read in conjunction with the Service Plan for RVJB, which details the aims, objectives and priorities for RVJB. Such aims include the improvement of business efficiency through less time spent searching for information, increased joined up working and improved communications across the organisation as a whole; the demonstration of compliance with statutory and regulatory recordkeeping obligations including the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and the Data Protection Act 2018; and the promotion of openness, transparency, accountability and improved corporate governance.
- 2.5 The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 places an obligation on named authorities in Scotland to produce a records management plan which sets out their arrangements for the effective management of all records. RVJB is a named authority as defined in the act. The creation of a records management policy statement is a mandatory element of the plan and is necessary in order to identify the procedures to be followed in managing the organisation's public records.

2.6 This policy:

- Provides the baseline requirements for good records management within RVJB to ensure records are created, managed and used effectively and efficiently and in compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations;
- Defines records management responsibilities throughout RVJB;
- Underpins a working culture which acknowledges the value and benefits of accurate record creation and effective management;
- Encourages a culture that retains records for only as long as required for business purposes.

3. Scope

- 3.1 The Assessor has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that adequate records are created and managed to meet the needs of RVJB and its citizens and he is the senior officer responsible for the management of the records plan under section 1(2a) of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 3.2 The Assistant Assessor has overall responsibility for developing and implementing the Records Management Plan.
- 3.3 This policy relates to all divisions and sectors of RVJB and all records created by its employees. It relates to the management of records as an internal, facilitating function of the organisation and covers the records created by the organisation, about its activities. It does not relate to the management of any former records that may have been transferred to an archive.
- 3.4 The policy relates to all staff. It applies to all records regardless of format or medium, including paper, electronic, audio or visual. All staff have a responsibility to manage our records from creation to disposal.
- 3.5 It is the responsibility of **all staff** to ensure that they create and capture appropriate records of their work and manage all records and information they use to support their work in line with the following principles:
- Information is a vital corporate resource;
 - Records belong to RVJB – not to individual officers;
 - Every member of staff has responsibilities to manage the records that they deal with;
 - Records should be held in a properly managed system;
 - Records should be reliable, accurate, up-to-date and fit for purpose;
 - Records should remain accessible for the lifetime of their retention;
 - Personal, sensitive or confidential information should be appropriately managed;
 - Records should be disposed of in accordance with the Retention Schedule;
 - Good records practice should be applied to all information – physical and electronic.

4. What is Records Management?

- 4.1 Records management may be defined as the process whereby an organisation manages its records, whether created internally or externally and in any format or media type, from their creation or receipt, through to their destruction or permanent preservation.
- 4.2 Records management is about placing controls around each stage of a record's lifecycle, at the point of creation (through the application of relevant data relating to a record, version control and naming conventions), during maintenance and use (through the management of security and access classifications, facilities for access and tracking of records), at regular review intervals (through the application of retention and disposal criteria), and ultimate disposal (whether this be recycling, confidential destruction or transfer to an archive for permanent preservation). By placing

such controls around the lifecycle of a record, we can ensure they demonstrate the key attributes of authenticity, reliability, integrity and accessibility, both now and in the future.

4.3 Through the effective management of the organisation's records, RVJB can provide a comprehensive and accurate account of its activities and transactions. This may be achieved through the management of effective metadata as well as the maintenance of audit trail data.

4.4 We retain records that provide evidence of our functions, activities and transactions, for:

- I) **Operational Use** – to serve the purpose for which they were originally created (eg property records), to support our decision-making processes, to allow us to look back at decisions made previously and learn from previous successes and failure (e.g. minutes of meetings), and to protect the organisation's assets and rights (e.g. Asset Register)
- II) **Internal & External Accountability** – to demonstrate transparency and accountability for all actions, to provide evidence of legislative, regulatory and statutory compliance and to demonstrate that all business is conducted in line with best practice (e.g. Policies & Procedures).

5. Why is Records Management Important?

5.1 Information and records are a valuable corporate asset without which we would be unable to carry out our functions, activities and transactions, meet the needs of our stakeholders, and ensure legislative compliance.

5.2 The benefits of implementing records management systems and processes include:

- I) Improved information sharing and the provision of quick and easy access to the right information at the right time;
- II) The support and facilitation of more efficient service delivery;
- III) Improved business efficiency through reduced time spent searching for information;
- IV) Demonstration of transparency and accountability for all actions;
- V) The maintenance of a record of the transactions of RVJB;
- VI) The creation of better working environments and identification of opportunities for office rationalisation;
- VII) Risk management in terms of ensuring and demonstrating compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory obligations;
- VIII) The meeting of stakeholder expectations through the provision of good quality services.

6. Policy Statement and Commitment

6.1 It is the policy of RVJB to maintain reliable and useable records, which are capable of supporting business functions and activities for as long as they are required. This will be achieved through the consolidation and establishment of effective records management policies and procedures, including:

- I) The development of a business classification scheme to reflect the functions, activities and transactions of RVJB.
- II) The review and consolidation of the retention and disposal schedule to provide clear guidance regarding the management of RVJB records.
- III) The review and consolidation of destruction arrangements to detail the correct procedures to follow when disposing of business information.

- IV) The production of archive transfer arrangements in order to provide advice and guidance on how to securely transfer records to the archive, if appropriate.
- V) The review and consolidation of information security policies and procedures in order to protect records and systems from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction.
- VI) The review and consolidation of data protection policies in order to demonstrate RVJB's commitment to compliance with the Act and the safeguarding and fair processing of all personal data held.
- VII) The continuing review of our business continuity arrangements, encompassing strategies to ensure that vital records held by RVJB remain accessible and that there are processes in place to monitor the integrity and usability of records
- VIII) The identification of records management as a distinct stream within the Board's training aims, with requisite training provided to all staff.
- IX) The completion of a self assessment review, following the implementation of the records management plan in order to ensure that the records management practices remain fit for purpose.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 All staff have a responsibility to manage records effectively, through the documentation of all decisions and actions made by RVJB; the effective maintenance of records throughout their lifecycle, including access, tracking and storage of records; the timely review of records and their ultimate disposal, whether this be for confidential destruction or recycling or transfer to an archive for permanent preservation.

Every employee (irrespective of grade or position) shall ensure that all key documents or records they are responsible for are filed in an appropriate manner. They shall ensure that they know:

- Where the records relating to the business of their team are stored;
- How they are handled / disposed of;
- How long they should be retained for;
- How their records management awareness and skills can be improved;
- What electronic folder set up is used within their team for the sharing of information; and how the information relevant to the official corporate record is identified;
- Ensuring that all actions and decisions of the RVJB are properly recorded and that records relating to their actions and decisions are authentic and reliable;
- Managing records to support the RVJB's business aims and objectives;
- Complying with this policy for records management;
- Complying with relevant legislation, policy and corporate guidance on records management.

- 7.2 The lead responsible officer for records management in RVJB is the Assessor. With the support of the Chair of the Governance Working Group, they have responsibility for ensuring compliance with this records management policy.

- 7.3 The management team is responsible for approving a corporate approach to the management of records as defined within this policy, promoting a culture of best practice recordkeeping principles and practices in order to improve business efficiency and supporting records management through commitment and the provision of resources.

- 7.4 All Line Managers are responsible for offering advice and guidance regarding records management to all staff within their section, highlighting any records management issues or concerns to the Chair of the Governance Working Group

- 7.5 All staff are responsible for suitably maintaining all records so that they can be easily retrieved, retaining all records in line with the retention and disposal schedule, ensuring that all actions and decisions are properly recorded and adhere to this policy.
- 7.6 The Chair of the Governance Working Group is responsible for ensuring that records management practices and procedures are established in line with all legal obligations and professional standards, issuing advice and guidance to all Line Managers where necessary. The Chair is also responsible for transferring any records of historical value to an archive for permanent preservation.

8. Legislative Framework

The management of RVJB's records is done so in line with the following legislative, statutory and regulatory framework. Compliance with this policy will facilitate compliance with these acts, regulations and standards.

- a) Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011
- b) Equality Act 2010
- c) Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006
- d) The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- e) Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- f) Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- g) Human Rights Act 1998
- h) Data Protection Act 2018
- i) Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
- j) Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- k) Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937

9. Relationship to other RVJB Policies

This policy forms part of RVJB's overall framework but specifically relates to the following policies and procedures:

- a) Data Protection Policy
- b) Retention Guidelines and Disposal Arrangements
- c) Information Security Policy
- d) Acceptable Use Policy
- e) Data Access and Building Security
- f) Access Control
- g) Security of IT Systems – Guidance to Staff
- h) Environmental Security Procedure
- i) Building Security Procedure
- j) Working in Secure Areas
- k) Malicious Code and Malware
- l) Protective Marking, Handling and Disposal
- m) Clear Desk and Screen
- n) Security Incident and Weakness

10. Training

Training will be provided to all staff in order to highlight and increase awareness of their responsibilities in line with data protection, freedom of information and records management. It is one of the responsibilities of RVJB's Data Protection Officer to provide such training. Furthermore, core competencies and key knowledge and skills required by staff with operational responsibility for records management will be clearly explained to staff to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, can offer advice and guidance, and can remain proactive in their management of recordkeeping issues and procedures within RVJB.

11. Monitoring & Review

- 11.1 Compliance with this Policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the *Chair of the Governance Working Group in consultation with Divisional Assessors and the Assessor*. Reports will be submitted to the Governance Working Group as appropriate, and updates will be disseminated to all staff when required.
- 11.2 Reviews of this policy will take place at least every two years in order to take account of any new or changed legislation, regulations or business practices, or alongside reviews by National Records of Scotland in line with the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 if sooner than two years.