



# **Records Management Policy**

LVJB RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY	
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2	Bernie Callaghan/Bill Kerr	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Reviewed roles and responsibilities
3	Bernie Callaghan/Bill Kerr	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2018	Reviewed roles and responsibilities to conform with new structure
4	Sharon Douglas	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	Legislation updates & additional policy inclusion
5	Bernie Callaghan	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Review of roles and responsibilities
6	Bernie Callaghan	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Assessor role made permanent
7	Sharon Douglas	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	Interim Assessor added & updates to legislation
8	Sharon Douglas	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Assessor role made permanent
9	Bernie Callaghan	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Staffing updates
10	Sharon Douglas	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	Assessor role made permanent, correction of typo in section 1.3

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# RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Assessor, on behalf of Lothian Valuation Joint Board (LVJB), 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 four constituent local authorities in Lothian.
- 1.2 This policy statement sets out an overview on how the Assessor intends to manage the records created and held in the course of carrying out these functions.
- 1.3 LVJB 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. 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.

## 2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the importance of managing records effectively within LVJB, to outline key aims and objectives in relation to recordkeeping, and to act as a mandate for the support and delivery of the records management policy, procedures and initiatives across LVJB.
- 2.2 This policy relates to all divisions and sectors of LVJB 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 or no longer held.
- 2.3 The policy relates to all staff and applies to all records regardless of format or medium, including paper, electronic, audio or visual.
- 2.4 The policy is to be read in conjunction with the Records Management Plan for LVJB, which details the aims, objectives and priorities for LVJB as well as the current recordkeeping practices in place within the organisation. 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 UK Freedom of Information Act 2000, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018; and the promotion of openness, transparency, accountability and good 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. LVJB 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.

### 3 RECORDS MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

3.1 Records management can 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.

3.2 Records management is about placing controls around each stage of a record's lifecycle, at the point of creation (through 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.

3.3 Through the effective management of the organisation's records, LVJB can provide a comprehensive and accurate account of its activities and transactions.

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

- **Operational Use** – to serve the purpose for which they were originally created, to support our decision-making processes, to allow us to look back at decisions made previously and learn from previous successes and failure, and to protect the organisation's assets and rights.
- **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.
- **Historical and Cultural Value** – to protect and make available the corporate memory of the organisation to all stakeholders and for future generations.

### 4 IMPORTANCE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

4.1 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.

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

- Improved information sharing and the provision of quick and easy access to the right information at the right time;
- The support and facilitation of more efficient service delivery;
- Improved business efficiency through reduced time spent searching for information;
- Demonstration of transparency and accountability for all actions;
- The maintenance of the organisation memory;

- The creation of better working environments and identification of opportunities for office rationalisation;
- Risk management in terms of ensuring and demonstrating compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory obligations;
- The meeting of stakeholder expectations through the provision of good quality services.

## **5 POLICY STATEMENT AND COMMITMENT**

5.1 It is the policy of LVJB 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:

- The development of a business classification scheme to reflect the functions, activities and transactions of LVJB.
- The review and consolidation of the retention and disposal schedule to provide clear guidance regarding the management of LVJB records.
- The review and consolidation of destruction arrangements to detail the correct procedures to follow when disposing of business information.
- The production of archive transfer arrangements in order to provide advice and guidance on how to securely transfer records to archive, if appropriate.
- 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.
- The review and consolidation of data protection policies in order to demonstrate LVJB's commitment to compliance with the Act and the safeguarding and fair processing of all personal data held.
- The maintenance of a business continuity plan, encompassing strategies to ensure that vital records held by LVJB remain accessible over time and that there are processes in place to monitor the integrity and usability of records.
- The review of audit trail mechanisms, the potential of existing systems, review of current provision and best practice, in order to produce a clear strategy for the management of key events in a record's lifecycle (e.g. creation, access, editing, destruction or preservation).
- The identification of records management as a distinct stream within the organisation with requisite training provided to all staff.
- 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.

5.2 It is the aim of Lothian 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. Adherence to the records management policy will be robustly monitored to ensure compliance.

Best Practice in records management will ensure that all information:

- received or created is stored in the appropriate way and is easily retrievable
- Is retained, destroyed or preserved in accordance with the Board's Retention and Disposal Arrangements
- Meets our current needs and our requirements into the foreseeable future
- Is capable of enabling change when required
- Is easily accessible to users and
- 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."

## **6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 6.1 The Head of Governance has overall responsibility for LVJB's records management policy who is supported by the Governance Committee who have responsibility for ensuring compliance with this records management policy.
- 6.2 The Head of Governance will have operational responsibility for overseeing the day to day operation of Records Management and will be supported by the Governance Committee. The Head of Governance will be responsible for approving a corporate approach to the management of records as defined within this policy, promoting a culture of excellent recordkeeping principles and practices in order to improve business efficiency, supporting records management through commitment and the provision of resources and recognising the importance of preserving LVJB's corporate memory.
- 6.3 The Chair of the Governance Committee 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 Corporate Leadership Team in order to meet the aims and objectives as outlined in the records management strategy.
- 6.4 The Head of Governance and Governance Team are responsible for offering advice and guidance regarding records management to all staff within their service, highlighting any records management issues or concerns to the Assessor and transferring any records of historical value to an archive for permanent preservation.
- 6.5 All staff have a responsibility to manage records effectively, through the documentation of all decisions and actions made by LVJB; 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 transfer to an archive for permanent preservation, or confidential destruction or recycling.
- 6.6 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 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

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

- Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006
- The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018

## **8 RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER LVJB POLICIES**

8.1 This policy forms part of LVJB's overall framework but specifically relates to the following legislation and policies/procedures of LVJB:

- UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018
- Records Retention & Disposal Policy
- Information and Technology Management and Security Policy; incorporating:-
  - Security Operating procedures
  - Information Security Policy
    1. Acceptable Use Policy
    2. Email/Internet Policy
    3. Clean Desk Policy
    4. Password Policy
    5. Mobile Device Policy
    6. Information Handling Policy
    7. Incident Handling Policy
    8. Data Breach Policy
    9. User Management Policy
    10. Third Party Connection Policy
    11. Business Continuity Plan
    12. Access Control Policy
    13. Change Management Policy
    14. Vulnerability Management Policy o

## **9 TRAINING**

- 9.1 A training programme will be provided to all staff in order to highlight and increase awareness of their responsibilities in line with UK GDPR & Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Records Management policies and procedures. Furthermore, core competencies and key knowledge and skills required by staff with operational responsibility for records management will be clearly defined to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, can offer advice and guidance, and can remain proactive in their management of record keeping issues and procedures within LVJB.

## **10 MONITORING & REVIEW**

- 10.1 Compliance with this Policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the Chair of the Governance Committee in consultation with Corporate Leadership Team. Regular reports will be submitted to the Governance Committee and Corporate Leadership Team and updates will be disseminated to all staff when required.
- 10.2 This policy will be reviewed in one year after submission to the National Records of Scotland; at which time compliance with the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 will also be reviewed. Further reviews of the policy will then take place every two years in order to take account of any new or changed legislation, regulations or business practices.