Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

Report to: **Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board**

Meeting on: **21 August 2015**

Subject: **Record Management Policy**

Author: **Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer**

1.0 Introduction

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.

This policy is derived from a "Model" Records Management Plan for Assessors and EROs was devised by the Scottish Assessors Association in conjunction with the Keeper of the Records of Scotland.

2. Recommendation

The Board approves the adoption of this policy.

Kate Crawford
Depute Assessor & ERO
12 August 2015

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RENFREWSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Records Management Policy

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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:

- *Received or created is stored in the appropriate way and easily retrievable.*

- *It is retailed, 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 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:**

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. 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 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.

2.2   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.

2.3   The policy relates to all staff. It 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 Service Plan for RVJB, which details the aims, objectives and priorities for RVJB 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 and the Data Protection Act 1998; 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.

3. What is Records Management?

3.1 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 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.

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 (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 (eg minutes of meetings), and to protect the organisation's assets and rights (e.g Asset Register)

- **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).

4. Why is Records Management Important?

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 a record of the transactions of RVJB;

- 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 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:

- The development of a business classification scheme to reflect the functions, activities and transactions of RVJB.

- The review and consolidation of the retention and disposal schedule to provide clear guidance regarding the management of RVJB 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 the 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 RVJB's commitment to compliance with the Act and the safeguarding and fair processing of all personal data held.

- 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

- The identification of records management as a distinct stream within the Board's training aims, 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.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 Divisional Assessors & Assistant ERO's are responsible for offering advice and guidance regarding records management to all staff within their division, highlighting any records management issues or concerns to the Chair of the Governance Working Group and transferring any records of historical value to an archive for permanent preservation.

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.

6.7 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 Divisional Assessors & Assistant ERO's where necessary.

7. Legislative Framework

7.1 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.

- 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
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937

8. Relationship to other RVJB Policies

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

- Data Protection Policy
- Retention Guidelines and Disposal Arrangements
- Business Continuity Plan & Disaster Recovery Plan (Being Updated to Follow)
- Information Technology – SPr.IT.33 Checking Events Logs and Recording Findings
- Information Technology –RVJB.IT.07Electoral Registration Data Access and Building Security Policy
- Information Technology – RVJB.IT02 Access Control Policy
- Information Technology – SP1.01 Information Security Policy
- Information Technology – SPr.IT.34 Protective Monitoring Policy
- Information Technology – SP1.04 Security Incident & weakness Policy
- Information Technology – RVJB.IT.01 Security of IT Systems – Guidance to Staff

- Information Technology – SPr.IT.32 Procedure for Disposal of Media

- Information Technology - SP1.20 Protective marking, Handling & Disposal Policy & Procedures

- Information Technology – RVJB.RM.01 Archiving Policy & Transfer Arrangements

- Information Technology – SPr.PE.01 Building Security Policy

- Information Technology – RVJB.IT.07 Data Access & Building Security Policy

- Information Technology – SP.1.02 – Acceptable Use Policy

9.   Training

9.1   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. 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 recordkeeping issues and procedures within RVJB.

10.   Monitoring & Review

10.1   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.* Regular reports will be submitted to the Governance Working Group and Policy & Strategy Management Group and updates will be disseminated to all staff when required.

10.2   This policy will be reviewed in one year's time at which time compliance with the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 will also be reviewed. Further reviews of the policy will then take place at least every two years in order to take account of any new or changed legislation, regulations or business practices.