

Title of meeting:	Resources Portfolio
Date of meeting:	19 January 2017
Subject:	Adoption of Records Management Policy
Report by:	Deputy Chief Executive, City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Wards affected:	N/A
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to present a Records Management Policy for approval and adoption by the Council.

2. Recommendations

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet Member for Resources agrees and adopts the draft Records Management Policy (attached as Appendix A)

3. Background

- 3.1 The ways PCC currently manages its records is not compliant with the law, inefficient, more expensive than necessary, and risks fines and damage to the Council's reputation. This Policy has been prepared as part of a strategy to address these issues. PCC has current policies relating to records management, but they deal with the topic only in passing, focusing on information governance or the records of individual activities. This policy is comprehensive and explicit; having it is a requirement of the Information Commissioner's Office.
- 3.2 The results of PCC's poor record-keeping practices are:
- Poor compliance with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts across PCC risking fines and damage to the Council's reputation
 - Keeping too many records, both paper and electronic, beyond their legal retention period or business use, leading to unnecessary storage costs. The Modern Records Store is almost full of paper documents and records can be deposited there only when others have been disposed of; some 8,000 boxes of records are therefore stored away from the Civic Offices in a commercial storage facility and there are others in a number of council buildings elsewhere in the city. The council's principal server contains 8.67 terabytes of data - some 11,940,784 individual documents.
 - Great difficulty ensuring that all copies of records that have reached the end of their retention period are disposed of

- Unnecessary trouble finding the information needed, resulting in poorer decision making, wasting staff time and causing frustration.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The Council should adopt the draft Records Management Policy in order to comply with the specific requirement of The Lord Chancellor's 'Code of Practice on the management of records issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000' to have such a policy.
- 4.2 The policy will also give a mandate to proposed reforms of the Council's recordkeeping practices.
- 4.3 Better recordkeeping would have the following advantages:
- Sustained reputation as trustworthy and efficient
 - More efficient and better decision making and service delivery
 - A happier, less-frustrated workforce
 - Significant savings in staff time (records management consultants estimate that each worker spends 10-40% of their time looking for information - a mere 1% improvement in that time gives the Council the equivalent of one extra member of staff per thousand employed)
 - Cash saving of up to £5,000 pa for storage of records in all media. We are currently paying some £20,900 pa for external storage of paper documents.
- 4.4 Most of these benefits are not quantifiable, but there will be an ongoing saving in the cost of both storing digital records and paper records externally. The expected savings quoted above are both conservative.

5. Equality impact assessment

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the recommended new policy will not change what the Council does in respect of anyone with whom it has dealings, but will ensure that the Council's actions are properly recorded. It will not affect people differently because of their age, religion, political views, race, disability, gender or any of the protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no negative legal implications

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from adopting the Council's Records Management policy set out in this report. Compliance with the policy in meeting existing obligations under current legislation should be met from existing budget provision. Any additional costs arising from the implementation of the policy or associated new legislation will be reported back to members for consideration.

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Signed by:
Deputy Chief Executive, City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Appendices:
Appendix A - Portsmouth City Council Records Management Policy

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Nil	

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Resources.