



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Information Management Strategy

Document 1

Strategy Summary



March 2006

Chester-Le-Street District Council Information Management Strategy

The Chester-le-Street Information Strategy comprises of three documents:

Document 1. Strategy Summary – sets out a plain English guide to the strategy

Document 2. Background and Key Messages – sets out the detail behind the strategy

Document 3. Model Action Plan – sets out a living action plan to deliver the strategy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document summarises both the backgrounds and Key Messages and Model Action Plan Documents. The three documents together form the councils Information Management Strategy. The Strategy introduces Information Management throughout the Authority. The Strategy is designed to be a living document as it is felt difficult to put clear deadlines on completion of key tasks. This is because the Strategy is a transformational one which seeks incremental improvement in Information Management and because the council would need to put certain management arrangements in place before it addresses key activities. The Strategy provides flexibility for the council to make choices about where and at what time the council will invests further in information management.
- 1.2 The Information Management Strategy seeks to address the issues the council needs to address to meet its legal requirements and responsibilities. All departments will need to work together and with appropriate partners to achieve our objectives. The intended audience is principally Members, Chief Officers, Senior Officers and staff with information management responsibilities. Our citizens, Local Strategic Partnerships, suppliers, other Local Authorities and public agencies must be made aware of our principles, policies and intentions however.
- 1.3 The provision of the Strategy is the first step in embedding Information Management Principles in the organisation. Its relationship with the overall process of Information Management is detailed in Document 2 Background and Key Messages..
- 1.4 The council's Corporate Plan and Improvement and Recovery Plan prioritise customer excellence as the way forward for Chester-le-Street. The Development of a Customer Excellence Strategy and Information Management Strategy are key components of the Corporate Plan and Improvement and Recovery Plan. An Information Management Strategy is needed to allow Chester-le-Street to have the right information about our customers so we can make the right decisions that affect our community at the right time.
- 1.5 The Information Management Strategy seeks, in particular, to meet the councils responsibility to achieve Priority Service Outcome G19 by establishing an action plan to achieve an Electronic Documents and Records Management system for the whole of the council.

1.6 This document:

- describes in a straightforward manner the nature of the Strategy;
- identifies the key issues or messages for the council
- sets out the key proposed actions; and
- addresses the issue of cost and benefits

2 The Nature of the Strategy

- 2.1 Information Management is about having the right information at the right time at the right cost. It is about making the best use of existing resources and being able to store retrieve and use information in accord with legislation and best practice.
- 2.2 The Information Management Strategy is a set of proposals which will determine how the council can best store, retrieve and use its information in the future. The Strategy is designed to be a living document. It will be constantly under review. The aim is to allow the council the highest degree of flexibility in meeting its responsibilities. This is deemed necessary in order that the council can use its scarce resources to its best advantage. This will avoid the council making up front commitments to implementing proposals in an increasingly changing technological environment. The Strategy therefore allows the council to agree a clear plan of action. It also allows the flexibility to move on to the next planned phase only after it has been able to review the situation based on its learning from the previous phase.

3 Key Messages

- 3.1 Document 2 of the strategy sets out the key responsibilities of the council. The following key messages have been developed in the Strategy:

Councillors, Executive Members and all Officers of the Council will need to treat Information as an Asset by good custodianship throughout the Information Lifecycle.

Chester-le-Street District Council will need to provide internal resources – Money, Management and Staff with the right skill set.

The council need to demonstrate compliance with government objectives for Electronic Document and Records Management as set out in the Priority Service Outcomes

Chester-le-Street District Council will need to demonstrate their compliance with all relevant Legislation

Chester-le-Street District Council will need to actively comply with the Data Protection Act. The authority falls short of demonstrating compliance throughout all levels of staff. A revamp of the policy and procedures need attention.

Senior management need to recognise that Records Management, Security, Compliance with Standards and the use of Graphical Information Systems are a key contributor to internal efficiency under the Gershon proposals.

The Information Management vision has to be communicated to all Chester-le-Street stakeholders. It should become an intrinsic part of how all stakeholders will treat information.

Information needs to be managed to a standard of good quality using recognised best practice from the British Standards Institute and The National Archives.

That a Corporate Governance Group should deliver the full range of Information Management activities as outlined in the Model Action Plan.

The council needs to develop and have approved a Policy for Openness and Transparency. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved an Information Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved a Records Management Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved an E-mail as Records Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved an Information Management Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved an approach for adopting standards.

The council needs to develop and have approved a security policy . Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

The council needs to develop and have approved a GIS Strategy and Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

Partnerships are seen by the government as the way forward, especially when Information Sharing is involved. A commitment is needed as to the role Information Management plays in sustaining local partnerships.

The council needs to develop and have approved a Communications Strategy and Policy taking into account the principles of Information Management.

The council needs to develop a culture of information management within the council

The council needs to ensure that the Strategy is performance managed to ensure that it achieves its aims.

The council needs to consider whether it requires an Information Management / Records Manager / Compliance Officer to administer and act as Information Champion with the council.

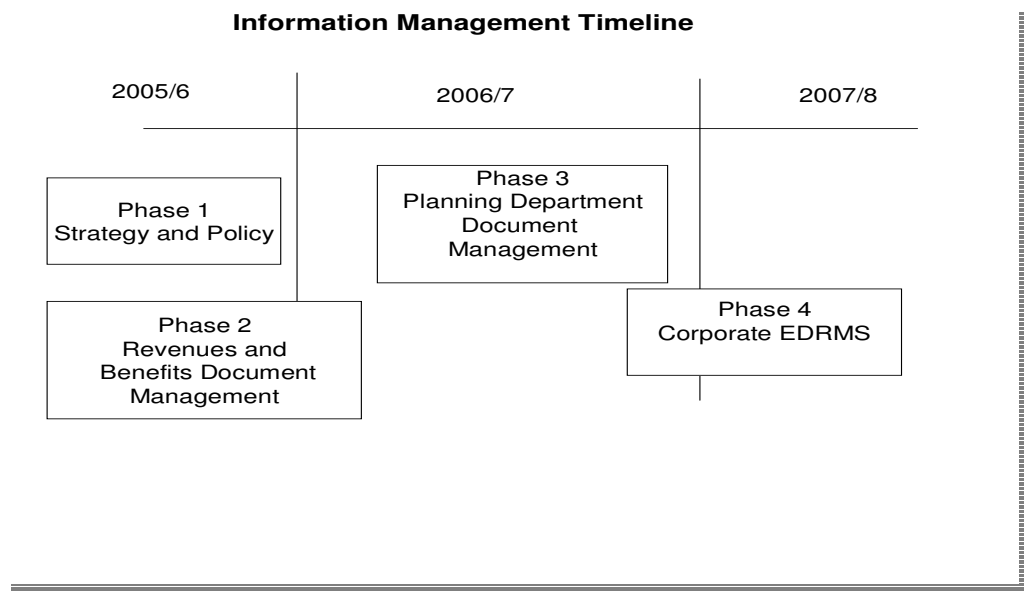
- 3.2 The adoption and implementation of this Information Management Strategy will go a long way to meeting the council's responsibilities arising from these key messages.

4 Key actions

- 4.1 Document 3 sets out the key actions in detail. The principle thrust of proposals is to meet Priority Service Out come G19 which states:

G19 "Adoption of ISO 15489 methodology for Electronic Document Records Management (ERDM) and identification of areas where current records management policies, procedures and systems need improvement to meet the requirements of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection legislation"

In order to meet the council's responsibilities the following timeline is established



4.2 The Plan has been designed taking into account firstly the needs of the customer, secondly the needs of the District Council, and thirdly the requirements of any legislation. Four key milestones, set out in detail in **Appendix 1** exist:-

Phase 1 – Development and Adoption of Information Management Strategy and associated policies

Phase 2 – Revenues and Benefits Document Management System

Phase 3 - Corporate EDRMS Project (Planning Pilot)

Phase 4 – Corporate Implementation of EDRMS

Decisions will be taken at the end of each phase as to whether to proceed to the next phase.

4.3 In addition to this the Strategy sets out six **Lines of Action** which aim to incrementally improve Information Management within the council. The implementation of these Lines of Action depend on decisions reached on whether or not to appoint a dedicated resource to manage information within the organisation. The Lines of Action are established under the following themes:

- Manage our Information
- Be Joined up internally and externally
- Give our people the right skills and competencies
- Establish an Information Governance
- Achieve Modernising Government Targets
- Establish the Risk Balance

A summary of key actions is provided in **Appendix 2**.

4 Cost and Benefits

4.1 It is difficult to give definitive guidance on the actual costs and financial benefits to the council by implementing the Strategy and action plan. A full business case will need to be developed for each individual phase of the Strategy. This will include procurement options.

4.2 Likely costs that may be incurred will include those set out below

External

One off Costs

Hardware

Software

Consultancy

Project Management

On-going costs

Hardware and Software Maintenance

Internal

One off Costs

Project Management

Consultancy

Corporate Scanning setup

Management of Change

Training

On going costs

ICT Support

Departmental staff

Records Manager or corporate solution

4.3 However the strategic benefits are:

- Improved relationship with the customer
- Enables business to be conducted in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner
- Support and document policy formation and managerial decision making
- Enables Chester-le-Street to meet legislative and regulatory requirements
- Protects the interests of the organisation
- Maintains the corporate memory and establishes business identity
- Optimises the use of information as a business asset and resource
- Improved Staff morale
- Supports Chester-le-Street in relation to Best Value and CPA

4.4 Additional benefits which result from electronic information management are:

- Improved access to vital records, saving time and energy
- Release of office space as electronic management usage increases
- Future possible cost savings in relation to paper/storage costs
- Reduction in document vulnerability
- Improved Business Recovery Possible
- Provide consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration
- Greater Audit potential

4.5 As indicated above it is not possible to quantify the financial implications of these benefits. They are however considered to be significant to the organisation. For example research has shown that:

- **10-15% of an Organisation's revenues are spent creating, managing and distributing documents**
- **60% of people's time is spent working with documents**
- **75-85% of business documents exist in paper form**

- **The average document is copied 5 times.**
- **The average worker spends 50-80% of their time looking for information required to support their job function**

....and as a result of Electronic Document and Records Management Systems.....

- **Employee Throughput Increase** **25% - 30%**
- **Transaction Time Reductions** **50% - 90%**
- **Typical Telephone Enquiry Time Reduction** **about 50%**
- **Productivity Improvements** **50% - 100%**
- **Paper Handling Reduction** **30% - 70%**
- **Employee Turnover Reduction** **about 80%**
- **Investment return in 12 to 24 months**

4.6 It is not suggested that the implementation of the Strategy will achieve such savings and assessment of this will be part of individual business cases. However the potential for significant efficiency savings is considered to be real and achievable. Consideration has been given to whether Phase 4 of the Model Action Plan timeline could be brought forward to materialise savings earlier. However it is considered that in view of the up front resource required, particularly in officer time this could seriously undermine the council's priorities for the 2006/2007. It is not therefore considered to be appropriate and the timeline as set out is more realistic in terms of the council's ability to deliver the Strategy.

5 Monitoring and Reviewing the Implementation of the Strategy

5.1 Strategies rapidly become obsolete unless constantly reviewed and adjusted as part of a permanent strategic management process. The council's Corporate Governance Group will maintain the currency of Chester-le-Street Information Management Strategy, involving stakeholders and other emerging groups where this is appropriate or necessary.

Appendix 1 : EDRMS Action Plan

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Appendix 2 : Summary of Model Action Plan

We Will	By When	Lead
Create, Approve and Communicate an Information Strategy	March 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an Information Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Records Management Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an Openness and Transparency Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an E-mail as Records Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the implementation of a Document Management System for Revenues and Benefits	May 2006	Jayne Henderson
Consider a resource for information management/records management and compliance officer	November 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Corporate Fileplan.	November 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Corporate Retention and Disposal Schedule	November 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the ISO 15489 compliance assessment	November 2006	Ian Forster
ISO 15489 Compliance Review	November 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the implementation of a Document Management System for Planning subject to learning from the Revenues and Benefits project	March 2007	Tom Watson

Complete Detailed Action Plan for Lines of Action subject to decision on information management resource officer	April 2007	Ian Forster
Resource a Corporate EDRMS subject to learning from the previous phase	March 2007	Ian Forster
Implement an EDRMS subject to learning from the previous phase	April 2008	Ian Forster
Develop a Security Policy and Review	April 2008	Ian Forster
Develop a GIS Policy and Strategy and Review	April 2008	Ian Forster
Engaged with the Durham Partnership on Information Management funding	ongoing	Graeme Clark