

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

**Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire Licensing Board**

Progress Update Review (PUR) Report by the PRSA Assessment Team

27th February 2023

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1. Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 20 April 2011. It is the first new public records legislation in Scotland since 1937 and came into force on 1 January 2013. Its primary aim is to promote efficient and accountable record keeping by named Scottish public authorities.

The Act has its origins in *The Historical Abuse Systemic Review: Residential Schools and Children's Homes in Scotland 1950-1995* (The Shaw Report) published in 2007. The Shaw Report recorded how its investigations were hampered by poor recordkeeping and found that thousands of records had been created, but were then lost due to an inadequate legislative framework and poor records management. Crucially, it demonstrated how former residents of children's homes were denied access to information about their formative years. The Shaw Report demonstrated that management of records in all formats (paper and electronic) is not just a bureaucratic process, but central to good governance and should not be ignored. A follow-up review of public records legislation by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) found further evidence of poor records management across the public sector. This resulted in the passage of the Act by the Scottish Parliament in March 2011.

The Act requires a named authority to prepare and implement a records management plan (RMP) which must set out proper arrangements for the management of its records. A plan must clearly describe the way the authority cares for the records that it creates, in any format, whilst carrying out its business activities. The RMP must be agreed with the Keeper and regularly reviewed.

2. Progress Update Review (PUR) Mechanism

Under section 5(1) & (2) of the Act the Keeper may only require a review of an authority's agreed RMP to be undertaken not earlier than five years after the date on which the authority's RMP was last agreed. Regardless of whether an authority has successfully achieved its goals identified in its RMP or continues to work towards them, the minimum period of five years before the Keeper can require a review of a RMP does not allow for continuous progress to be captured and recognised.

The success of the Act to date is attributable to a large degree to meaningful communication between the Keeper, the Assessment Team, and named public authorities. Consultation with Key Contacts has highlighted the desirability of a mechanism to facilitate regular, constructive dialogue between stakeholders and the Assessment Team. Many authorities have themselves recognised that such regular communication is necessary to keep their agreed plans up to date following inevitable organisational change. Following meetings between authorities and the Assessment Team, a reporting mechanism through which progress and local initiatives can be acknowledged and reviewed by the Assessment Team was proposed. Key Contacts have expressed the hope that through submission of regular updates, the momentum generated by the Act can continue to be sustained at all levels within authorities.

The PUR self-assessment review mechanism was developed in collaboration with stakeholders and was formally announced in the Keeper's Annual Report published on 12 August 2016. The completion of the PUR process enables authorities to be credited for the progress they are effecting and to receive constructive advice concerning on-going developments. Engaging with this mechanism will not only maintain the spirit of the Act by encouraging senior management to recognise the need for good records management practices, but will also help authorities comply with their statutory obligation under section 5(1)(a) of the Act to keep their RMP under review.

3. Executive Summary

This Report sets out the findings of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) Assessment Team's consideration of the Progress Update template submitted for Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board. The outcome of the assessment and relevant feedback can be found under sections 6 – 8.

4. Authority Background

Renfrewshire Council is one of 32 council areas of Scotland. Located in the west central Lowlands, it is one of three council areas contained within the boundaries of the historic county of Renfrewshire, the others being East Renfrewshire to the east and Inverclyde to the west. It also shares borders with Glasgow, North Ayrshire and West Dunbartonshire Councils. It is the 9th largest local authority in Scotland with over 9000 staff and a population of 170,000.

Renfrewshire Licensing Board consists of a convenor and 7 councillors covering licensing issues in the local authority area.

5. Assessment Process

A PUR submission is evaluated by the Act's Assessment Team. The self-assessment process invites authorities to complete a template and send it to the Assessment Team one year after the date of agreement of its RMP and every year thereafter. The self-assessment template highlights where an authority's plan achieved agreement on an improvement basis and invites updates under those 'Amber' elements. However, it also provides an opportunity for authorities not simply to report on progress against improvements, but to comment on any new initiatives, highlight innovations, or record changes to existing arrangements under those elements that had attracted an initial 'Green' score in their original RMP submission.

The assessment report considers statements made by an authority under the elements of its agreed Plan that included improvement models. It reflects any changes and/or progress made towards achieving full compliance in those areas where agreement under improvement was made in the Keeper's Assessment Report of their RMP. The PUR assessment report also considers statements of further progress made in elements already compliant under the Act.

Engagement with the PUR mechanism for assessment cannot alter the Keeper's Assessment Report of an authority's agreed RMP or any RAG assessment within it. Instead the PUR Final Report records the Assessment Team's evaluation of the submission and its opinion on the progress being made by the authority since agreeing its RMP. The team's assessment provides an informal indication of what marking an authority could expect should it submit a revised RMP to the Keeper under the Act, although such assessment is made without prejudice to the Keeper's right to adopt a different marking at that stage.

Key:

G	The Assessment Team agrees this element of an authority's plan.	A	The Assessment Team agrees this element of an authority's progress update submission as an 'improvement model'. This means that they are convinced of the authority's commitment to closing a gap in provision. They will request that they are updated as work on this element progresses.	R	There is a serious gap in provision for this element with no clear explanation of how this will be addressed. The Assessment Team may choose to notify the Keeper on this basis.
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6. Progress Update Review (PUR) Template: Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board

Element	Status of elements under agreed Plan 16AUG16	Progress review status 18MAR21	Progress review status 27FEB23	Keeper's Report Comments on Authority's Plan 16AUG16	Self-assessment Update 18NOV20	Progress Review Comment 18MAR21	Self-assessment Update as submitted by the Authority since 18MAR21	Progress Review Comment 27FEB23
1. Senior Officer	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	Alastair MacArthur, Director of Finance and Resources. Mark Conaghan, Head of Corporate Governance is the contact names under Element 1 for Renfrewshire Licensing Board.	Many kind thanks for indicating that there has been an update to the Senior Officer named under Element 1 for Renfrewshire Council, and Renfrewshire Licensing Board respectively. We have taken a note of this. Renfrewshire Council and Licensing Board have also kindly provided email addresses for these contacts.
2. Records Manager	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	Stacey Anderson, Information Governance Officer. The Information Governance Officer has been allocated some records management responsibilities on a temporary basis while the Records Manager post remains vacant at the Council. The IG officer has completed a postgraduate degree in archives and records management.	Thank you for confirming that Stacey Anderson, Information Governance Officer, remains the person named under Element 2, and the Keeper's Key Contact, even though the Records Manager post remains vacant. For comments on competency framework, see Element 12.
3. Policy	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
4. Business Classification	A	A	A	Although a Business Classification Scheme has been developed, it is yet to be fully rolled out across the Council and Licensing Board. The RMP outlines how this will take place, with the BCS providing the structure for the EDMS and shared drives. The Keeper would welcome updates concerning the progress of work in this area. The IT department of the Council are currently investigating the possibility of purchasing an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS). The Keeper would like to be	The Council now categorises all SharePoint sites to align with the Council's BCS. The classification(s) relevant to each site are now captured on the request form and held on a central SharePoint register.	The Keeper's Assessment Team thanks Renfrewshire Council for this update. The Business Classification has been developed and rolled out and is currently being mapped against the new Document Management System.	Rather than procure an EDRMS system, the Council approach will be to demonstrate that we are managing electronic records across a number of existing separate applications by ensuring those systems and any	The Assessment Team thanks you for this update, and confirmation that Renfrewshire Council's current approach does not involve the procurement of a dedicated EDRM system. Even if more than one record system exists

				<p>informed of the Council's decisions on whether to implement an EDRMS.</p> <p>Once the BCS has been fully developed, the Council intends to integrate this document with the retention schedule and other information such as vital records to create a unified document. The Keeper commends this approach and would be interested to learn more about this project.</p> <p>The Keeper can agree this element on an 'improvement model' basis. This means that the authority has identified a gap in provision (a BCS that requires to be implemented across the Council) and has identified how it intends to close this gap and the timescales involved. As part of this agreement the Keeper requests that he is kept informed as work to close the gap progresses.</p>	<p>Information within specific Council systems (applications) are by default categorised with the classification(s) relevant to the Service(s) which own the system. We have recorded Business Classifications against all systems in the Council's application catalogue.</p> <p>The Council's Electronic Document Management system already tags documents relevant to Service and Function, closely in line with the BCS. New functionality within the new EDM version to be rolled out shortly will also enable us to map the tagging within the system to the BCS. Additional functionality is now available to allow a protective marker to be added to a document type so that it always applies the marker.</p> <p>The Council is currently considering all opportunities to exploit SharePoint as a Document Management System.</p>	<p>The Assessment Team looks forward to updates in subsequent PURs.</p> <p>This element remains at Amber while this work is ongoing.</p> <p>It appears that all public records, including those on line-of-business systems ('application catalogue') are included in the Council overarching BCS.</p> <p>The authority has confirmed details of the overarching BCS coverage and provided additional information: Level 1 and Level 2 (where appropriate) BCS tagging is used for all SharePoint sites created by ICT and Applications on the Renfrewshire Council's Business Application Catalogue. The Council EDM information is currently structured and tagged in a Service and Function layout similar to that in the BCS. BCS Tagging has not been applied to files/folders on shared drives (on the Council's in-house Storage Area Network).</p> <p>It is clear that centralised control is part of the plans for the Document Management System (for example the SharePoint register). This is commendable.</p>	<p>supplementary processes are meeting the principles of Records Management. In this way, the Council are working towards having EDRMS functionality on its systems, rather than a single EDRMS system for all records.</p> <p>The Council will continue to utilise SharePoint sites for collaboration and document/file sharing; these sites are tagged with Business Classification Scheme categories. We are also working to ensure that all relevant existing line-of-business systems have the required records management functionality.</p> <p>In order to achieve this, Services are currently working with the Information Governance Officer and ICT to ensure that their systems are capable of disposing of records in line with the Council's Records Retention Schedule (whether this is a built-in functionality or requires manual deletion) and that staff are using this function. Systems are being checked to ensure functionality is available and utilised to tag documents.</p> <p>We have begun work with our Adult Services and Environment & Infrastructure Services to work through their existing line-of-business systems (for example, Eclipse for social work). Prior to conducting the appraisals of service systems, the IG Officer and ICT enlisted</p>	<p>for the management of records (in this case, SharePoint sites and line-of-business systems), this is not an issue as long as a single structure (Business Classification Structure, Information Asset Register, or similar) is in place for the records the authority creates. Under Element 4 of the Act, the Keeper expects that the authority will have properly considered Business Classification mechanisms, and that these reflect the authority's functions. The key aspect of this is that the authority can demonstrate that it has both full understanding and effective control of the information it keeps.</p> <p>While the current situation is a transitory one, it is clear that Renfrewshire Council and Licensing Board are working towards a more robust, single BCS across all of the relevant systems in use.</p> <p>The Assessment Team understands that the practical application of this approach is tested through the operation of the Records Retention Schedule.</p> <p>This element remains at Amber while the work is ongoing. The Assessment Team look forward to being updated on progress in subsequent PURs.</p>
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							service representatives to evaluate the existing retention schedules and locations of their records in preparation for examining the respective system's functionality.	
5. Retention Schedule	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
6. Destruction Arrangements	A	G	G	<p>The Records Manager is working on developing processes and procedures for the destruction of electronic records managed on some line-of-business systems. There is also a commitment to develop a methodology to impose control on these systems as they do not currently have the functionality to allow the systematic deletion of records in line with the retention schedule. The Keeper commends this initiative and requests that he is kept up-to-date on progress.</p> <p>The Council's Document Disposal Guidelines Document will be approved by the Records Management Working Group in August 2016. Accordingly, the Keeper asks for sight of the approved version when it becomes available.</p> <p>The Keeper can agree this element on an 'improvement model' basis. This means that the authority has identified a gap in provision (the deletion of records from some line of business systems) and has evidenced a commitment to closing this gap. This agreement is dependent upon the Keeper being kept informed of progress as work to close the gap moves forward.</p>	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
7. Archiving and Transfer	G	G	G	<p>The Action Plan section of this element commits the Council to developing more detailed guidance concerning the selection and transfer of records to the Heritage Centre Archive. The Keeper would appreciate sight of this guidance once it has been completed and approved.</p> <p>The Keeper can agree this element on an 'improvement model' basis. This means that the authority has identified a gap in provision (a Council-wide system of transferring appropriate records to the archive) and has identified how it intends to close this gap. The Keeper, as a condition of this agreement, requests that he is kept informed of progress in this area.</p>	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
8. Information Security	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
9. Data Protection	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
10. Business Continuity and Vital Records	G	G	G	One of the Action Plans under this element is for the Records Manager to raise awareness of vital records within the Corporate Resilience Group and ultimately to include vital records within the Business Classification Scheme. The Keeper requests that he is kept informed of the progress of this work.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.

11. Audit Trail	A	G	G	<p>The project to implement the BCS will be used to identify the level of provision in place across different service areas and, if necessary, implement systems for the tracking of paper records. The Keeper would be interested to know the results of this project.</p> <p>The authority intends to assess the level of audit trail functionality of their electronic line of business systems and alongside this will establish disposal capabilities within these systems. This work is anticipated to be finished by December 2016. The Keeper would like to be kept informed of work in this area.</p> <p>There is no audit trail functionality or version control applied within the Council's shared drives. The authority intends to rectify this through the Business Classification Scheme and the development of staff guidance. The Keeper requests sight of this guidance and training material once available and asks for updates concerning the BCS.</p> <p>The Keeper can agree this element on an 'improvement model' basis. This means that the authority has identified a gap in provision (lack of audit trail for some electronic line of business systems and records stored on shared drives) and has identified how it intends to improve the levels of provision. As part of this agreement, the Keeper will need to be kept informed of progress.</p>	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.
12. Competency Framework	G	G	G	<p>The Keeper commends the initiative to create a specific training module on records management and would be interested to see a sample of this once available.</p>	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	<p>Thank you for updating us under Element 2 that the Information Governance Officer has completed a postgraduate qualification in archives and records management.</p> <p>Update required on any change.</p>
13. Assessment and Review	A	G	G	<p>There is a strong commitment to undertake periodic reviews and audits of the RMP and accompanying policies, as well as a plan to develop a review and assessment protocol which will provide a framework for ensuring that the RMP remains up-to-date. The Keeper commends this approach and requests that he is sent the assessment methodology once it has been developed and approved.</p> <p>The Keeper can agree this element on an 'improvement model' basis. This means that the authority has identified a gap in provision (the methodology for carrying out regular reviews of the RMP) and has evidenced a commitment to closing this gap. This agreement is conditional on being provided with the assessment methodology once it has been developed and implemented.</p>	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	<p>Renfrewshire Council and Licensing Board are commended for their regular participation in the Progress Update Review process.</p> <p>Update required on any change.</p>
14. Shared Information	G	G	G	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.	No change.	Update required on any change.

7. The Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's Summary

Version

The progress update submission which has been assessed is the one received by the Assessment Team on 28th October 2022. The progress update was submitted by Stacey Anderson, Information Governance Officer.

The progress update submission makes it clear that it is a submission for **Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board**.

The Assessment Team has reviewed Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board's Progress Update submission and agrees that the proper record management arrangements outlined by the various elements in the authority's plan continue to be properly considered. The Assessment Team commends this authority's efforts to keep its Records Management Plan under review.

General Comments

Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board continues to take its records management obligations seriously and is working to bring all elements into full compliance.

Section 5(2) of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 provides the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) with authority to revisit an agreed plan only after five years has elapsed since the date of agreement. Section 5(6) allows authorities to revise their agreed plan at any time and resubmit this for the Keeper's agreement. The Act does not require authorities to provide regular updates against progress. The Keeper, however, encourages such updates.

The Keeper cannot change the status of elements formally agreed under a voluntary submission, but he can use such submissions to indicate how he might now regard this status should the authority choose to resubmit its plan under section (5)(6) of the Act.

8. The Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's Evaluation

Based on the progress update assessment the Assessment Team considers that Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Licensing Board continue to take their statutory obligations seriously and are working hard to bring all the elements of their records management arrangements into full compliance with the Act and fulfil the Keeper's expectations.

The Assessment Team recommends authorities consider publishing PUR assessment reports on their websites as an example of continued good practice both within individual authorities and across the sector.

This report follows the Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's review carried out by



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