

From the Section 61 Code of Practice

2. Records management policy

Authorities should have in place a records management policy, either as a separate policy or as part of a wider information or knowledge management policy.

2.1 The policy should be endorsed by senior management, for example at board level, and should be readily available to staff at all levels. The policy should identify a person at senior level who has overall strategic responsibility for records management.

2.2 The policy provides a mandate for the records and information management function and a framework for supporting standards, procedures and guidelines. The precise contents will depend on the particular needs and culture of the authority but it should as a minimum:

- a) Set out the authority's commitment to create, keep and manage records which document its principal activities;
- b) Outline the role of records management and its relationship to the authority's overall business strategy;
- c) Identify and make appropriate connections to related policies, such as those dealing with email, information security and data protection;
- d) Define roles and responsibilities, including the responsibility of individuals to document their work in the authority's records to the extent that, and in the way that, the authority has decided their work should be documented, and to use those records appropriately;
- e) Indicate how compliance with the policy and the supporting standards, procedures and guidelines will be monitored.

2.3 The policy should be kept up to date so that it reflects the current needs of the authority. One way of ensuring this is to review it at agreed intervals, for example every three or five years, and after major organisational or technological changes, in order to assess whether it needs amendment. Authorities should remain aware of their responsibilities to review RMPs under s.5 of the 2011 Act.

2.4 The authority should consider publishing the policy so that members of the public can see the basis on which it manages its records.