

## Corporate Service

## Records Management Policy

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Version Control	Changes Made	Author
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## Records Management Policy

### 1. Introduction and Policy Statement

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) recognises the creation and maintenance of reliable records that provide evidence of, and account for, the daily functions and business activities of the Service as well as being the major component of its corporate memory. Efficient and orderly Records Management is vital to the delivery of our services and provides evidence of what we do and why we do it, thereby protecting the interests of the organisation, its staff and all who interact with it.

The Service is committed to complying with statutory requirements, government-led initiatives under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria (Fire and Rescue Authority) Order 2022, The Cumbria (Structural Changes) Order 2022, Policing and Crime Act 2017, and The Civil Contingencies Act 2004. As well as professional standards relating to effective organisational Records Management, not limited to, but including Local Government Acts (1972, 1985, 2000, 2003), Public Records Acts (1958 and 1967), Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000), UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR 2018), and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).



## 1.1 Records and Information Management

The International Standard for Records Management (ISO:15489-1) describes a record as: **“information created, received, and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organization or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business”**.

Records Management is described in the same International Standard as:

***“field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records”***.

The function of Records Management is extremely important as Fire and Rescue Services are publicly accountable. CFRS endeavours to meet the National standards affecting Records Management including the following:

- **BS ISO 15489-1**: = (2001 > 2016 revision]: Records Management concepts and principles.
- **MoReq 2010**: Modular requirements for Records Systems.
- **Lord Chancellors Code of Practice under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act** (2002, 2009 > 2021 revision): keeping, management and destruction of records.
- **BS 10008** (2008, 2014 > 2020 revision): Evidential weight and legal admissibility of electronically stored information.
- **ISO 23081-1** (2006, 2009 & 2011 > 2017 revision): Metadata for records.

Contact Records Management Service if you require access to the content of these standards, or any further information.

## 1.2 The Importance of Records Management to the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service

Fire and Rescue Services are dependent on their information and records for the effective and efficient delivery of their services and responsibilities. Records need to be managed efficiently and cost-effectively to ensure that legal, operational and information requirements are met. Failure to manage information and records properly is a significant risk.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service’s information and records are its corporate memory, providing evidence of its transactions and decisions. They are a vital asset which is required for its daily operations, including compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. They:

- Provide evidence of and help with decision-making.
- Protect the interests of the Service as a corporate body.
- Help Business continuity in the event of a disaster.
- Protect the rights of employees, the public and service providers.
- Help CFRS to deliver services in accountable, consistent, and equitable ways.
- Help CFRS to make good use of precedents and organisational experience.
- Support consistency, creativity, efficiency, and productivity.
- Improve transparency and accountability.
- Protect rights of individuals and the public.

- Improve policy formation.
- Improve management of business risks.
- Protect and support in litigation.
- Improve ability to demonstrate corporate responsibilities, including sustainability.
- Demonstrate cost savings in terms of employee's time.
- Reduce storage cost as data is cleansed.
- Improve protection and preservation of corporate and societal memory.
- Improve customer service delivery.
- Improve data sharing for partnership working.
- Help to support an agile flexible workforce, by enabling the right access to the right information at the right time.
- Increase collaborative working.
- Increase information integrity as duplication within the information estate is reduced.
- Safeguard against reputational damage, enforcement notices and fines.
- Help to comply with legislation and business rules, by enabling easy application of retention and disposal rules.
- Simplify creation of Information Asset Registers.
- Support business intelligence and analysis of data, which are reliant on effective recordkeeping.

## 2. Principles

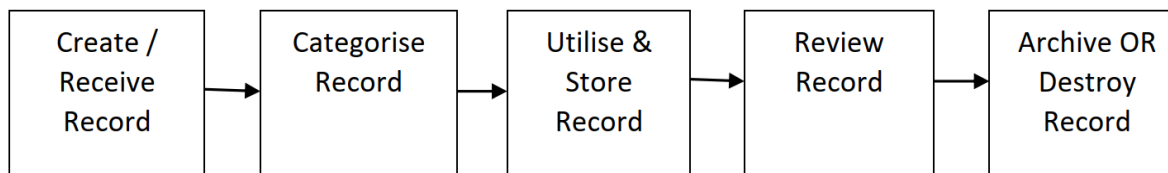
Records are defined as information that is created or received, captured, and maintained as evidence of the business of the CFRS, due to its operational, legal, financial, or historical value to the organisation.

Records support CFRS decision-making, functions, activities, transactions, and policy. A systematic and controlled approach to Records Management protects customers, staff, and Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (CCFRA) Members; by ensuring records are kept for evidential purposes relating to decisions and actions.

The CFRS is required to comply with the Data Protection principles, in [UK GDPR Article 5](#), which stipulates that all records created by the Council should be:

- accurate and up to date,
- adequate, relevant, and not excessive,
- authentic, reliable, and have integrity,
- kept securely and for the correct amount of time, in accordance with legal and business requirements,
- protected against accidental loss, damage, or destruction, and
- useable for the period of time that they have to be kept for.

The CFRS has to manage and maintain records and information from when they are created to when they are destroyed or archived. The stages of the record life cycle are shown below:



The process of Records Management has to account for all of the Service's actions and decisions. The lifecycle approach ensures that records are managed and maintained for as long as they are required.

### 3. Scope

This policy, together with the associated standards, applies to the management of all documents and records, in all technical or physical formats or media, created or received by the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service in the conduct of its business activities. It applies to all Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority members, staff, contractors, consultants, and third parties who are given access to our documents and records and information processing facilities.

### 4. Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that effective Records Management supports the delivery of services and business functions throughout Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service; that records are created, captured, and managed following best practices; and provides a means of communicating Records Management responsibilities to all employees.

Successful implementation will mean that:

- All staff recognise that it is their responsibility to ensure records are managed following best practices.
- Records are valued as corporate assets and can be trusted as reliable, authentic information resources.
- Records are created and managed efficiently, making them accessible when required, protecting, and storing them securely and disposing of them appropriately in line with the Corporate Fire and Rescue Service Retention and Disposal Guidelines.
- The Fire and Rescue Service makes full use of its Records Management Service (currently hosted by Cumberland Council) to coordinate and implement Records Management procedures across the Service.
- Records are sent to the Records Management Service for secure and economical storage wherever practicable and appropriate.
- The relevant legislation is complied with.
- The Service will make information available wherever possible, within the bounds of its statutory obligations.
- Standards, procedures, and guidelines are provided as a supporting framework for this policy document.
- Staff have access to relevant Records Management training appropriate to their role within the Fire and Rescue Service.
- This policy is reviewed annually ensuring it continues to be relevant and appropriate.

## 5. Responsibilities

All those with responsibility for producing or handling Service records have an active role to play in their management.

The Chief Fire Officer and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for:

- Service-wide endorsement and ownership of the relevant strategies, policies and guidance and the appointment of the appropriate information guardians and groups.

The Corporate Records Management Service is responsible for:

- The transfer, maintenance, monitoring, auditing, appraisal, and disposal of records are carried out appropriately and communicated to all relevant parties within the Service.

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all employees complete mandatory information security Training and that compliance with the Service's Records Management Policy and all other statutory and regulatory guidance relating to their field is monitored.

All permanent and temporary employees, apprentices, , contractors, and Partners are responsible for:

- Complying with the Service's documented Records Management policies and procedures.

## 6. Key Elements and Outcomes

The Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service currently has a hosted Records Management Service (RMS), with Cumberland Council.

The adoption of an effective Records and Information Management Strategy will consider:

- Responsibilities and accountabilities relating to Records Management functions.
- Record quality.
- Management of records.
- Storage and preservation of records.
- Security of records.
- Access to records.
- Retention and disposal of records.
- Collaborative working and Records Management provision.
- Audit requirements.
- Training and staff development.
- Current levels of awareness/understanding of Records Management across the Service.
- Adherence to the Service Plan.

## 7. Policy Monitoring and Review

Compliance with this policy and related procedures will be monitored periodically through self-assessment, by SLT and meeting with the hosted service provider the Records Management Service, Cumberland Council. Changes, modifications and revisions will be approved by the Head of Corporate Services.

## 8. Related Documents

The Service's records are hosted by Cumberland Council Records Management Service which has several pieces of guidance available upon request.

- Retention and Disposal Schedule (with quick user guide).
- Fire and Rescue Service has its own Retention and Disposal Schedule (maintained by CFRS);
- Managing your records guidance.
- Decluttering and disposal guidance.
- Depositing records guidance.
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Other Service Policies and guidance linked to Records Management include:

- [Information Security Policy and guidance.](#)
- [Information Security and Data Protection online training course.](#)
- [Data Protection guidance.](#)

## 9. Contact Details

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