

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Executive – 20 July 2022

Information Management Policies

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Benet Allen

Report Author: Lauren Davis – Information and Records Manager

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

1.1 **The Information and Records Management Policy** sets out our rules and guidance on how we must hold, handle and store our corporate data, in both digital and paper formats. It covers such things as the importance of records management, roles and responsibilities of Information Management/ICT and Staff, the functional structure of our Corporate FilePlan (our Electronic Documents and Records Management System, EDRMS), classification of personal data, our Retention and Disposal schedule and the legal framework that we all must adhere to. It is aimed at Internal Staff.

1.2 **The Digital Information Policy** sets out all of our applications within MS365 (Microsoft 365) that can store data and the rules we have in place against each, e.g., use, permission, access, storage.

Microsoft 365 has replaced Office 2013 as the corporate platform to conduct daily administrative tasks and actions. MS365 provides a modern cloud-based platform which includes the tools and technologies required to carry out council business in digital format. Cloud storage provides very secure storage, resilient disaster recovery and is accessible from anywhere.

This policy was originally going to be a MS365 specific, to include such applications as OneDrive, SharePoint, Teams, Outlook, OneNote, however it was refined to include other applications that sit outside of the MS365 platform such as Zoom. It is aimed at internal Staff.

1.3 **The Digital Information and Records Management Policy for Councillors** is an amalgamation of the previous two policies (sections 1.1 and 1.2) but has been tailored to be specifically relevant to Councillors. It is aimed only at our Councillors.

2 Recommendations

2.1 To sign off all three Information Management Policies (Information and Records Management Policy, Digital Information Policy and Digital Information and Records

Management Policy for Councillors) and champion their adherence, to ensure we are compliant as a local authority under the rules of Records Management and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations), in relation to how we hold, handle, and store our Corporate Data.

3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

- 3.1 There is a risk of non-compliance under the rules of Records Management and GDPR. These policies cover the legal framework and business agreed rules of which we must adhere to.

An additional risk if the information set out within these three policies is not easily available would be data breaches, however this risk is reduced with their implementation.

4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 These reports detail three new policies going forward for sign off through the July Executive meeting cycle.

1. Information and Records Management Policy
2. Digital Information Policy
3. Digital Information and Records Management Policy for Councillors

These policies are the culmination of the past 4 years' work under Information Management, of which has entirely changed the way we manage our corporate records. The Digital Transformation Programme/Information Management Project was awarded by the iESE Public Sector Awards in 2021 with a Certificate of Excellence.

Somerset West and Taunton Council are now recognised as an exemplar in Information Management and have received lots of interest from other organisations to demonstrate our journey and what we have achieved.

The authors of these policies are Lauren Davis, Information and Records Manager at Somerset West and Taunton Council, and Michele Noad, External Records Management expert and they are fundamental in our compliance as a local authority under the rules of Records Management/GDPR in managing our digital and paper records lawfully.

Somerset West and Taunton Council could be at risk with the ICO (Information Commissioners Office) and potentially fined if we were found to be in breach of compliance.

5 Links to Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 Internal Operations Strategic Priorities.

Digital – make it easier for our customer to engage with us and access the information

they need, through the introduction and promotion of new technology and a wide choice of access options.

Modernisation – improve customer satisfaction through stronger processes, clear responsibility, and ownership.

These reports links to both the Digital and Modernisation priorities, we have improved our internal and external customers digital experience by holding our corporate data lawfully and modernised our document management system of which holds that data.

Our policies set out, in detail, all the rules for managing our corporate data and everyone's responsibilities in that task.

6 Finance / Resource Implications for Somerset Council in future years

Please also identify /summarise ongoing financial / resource implications on the unitary council from the recommendations in this report e.g. impacts on future budgets, costs, income, or reserves, or significant asset related changes such as asset disposals. Contact your finance business partner for advice if required.

6.1 No current financial or resource implications.

6.2 There is potential under the Somerset Council to reduce the number of paper stores currently used by Somerset West and Taunton Council. This could result in asset changes, however the work here is just beginning and we do not have any detail yet.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 These policies set out how our corporate data must be held, handled, and stored and there would be legal implications if these rules were not adhered to and resulted in a data breach.

8 Data Protection Implications

8.1 These policies clearly state how all personal data must be handled and stored. There would be a risk of non-compliance/data breaches if these polices are not implemented and adhered to.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Audit and Governance Committee – No**
- **Executive – Yes (20/07/2022)**
- **Full Council – No**

Reporting Frequency: Once only

List of Appendices (background papers to the report)

Appendix A	Information and Records Management Policy
Appendix B	Digital Information Policy
Appendix C	Digital Information and Records Management Policy for Councillors

Contact Officers

Name	Lauren Davis
Direct Dial	01823 218710
Email	l.davis@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk