Dumfries and Galloway Council

Information Strategy

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Prepared By	Information Governance Team (IGT)
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Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Name
V0.1	08 April 2022	Initial draft – created in replacement of Information Management Strategy	DGC / HJBS
V0.2	11 May 2022	Review and comment	DGC / HJBS
V0.3	18 May 2022	Corporate branding and tracked revision	IGT
V0.4	14 July 2022	Addition on scoping paragraph	DGC / HJBS
V0.5	30 August 2022	IGT amendments and finalisation of document	IGT
V0.6	30 August 2022	Factoring in changes from IMG	IGT
V0.7	5 September 2022	Adding an overview of phases 3 & 4	HJBS
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Approvals

Communities Committee	6 October 2022

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Introduction

This document sets out the strategic objectives for managing the Council's information as a critical asset. Our overarching and long-term vision is to seamlessly integrate information and records management requirements into the digital environment for Council staff and those working with the organisation. This will play an important role in enabling the Council to deliver our priorities as well as maximising the potential of information to facilitate continuous improvement.

The strategy has been developed on the basis that information is:

- Critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council.
- Recognised and valued as an asset, which is demonstrated through delivery of this strategy.
- Managed efficiently and consistently, and in a way that enables delivery of our core organisational objectives.
- Appropriately secured while remaining readily accessible at the right time and place and in the right format to facilitate delivery of services.
- Reliable, accurate, and proactively managed throughout all stages of the life cycle.

Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives to achieve our vision are to:

- Assess where it would improve business processes, move towards the digitisation of information, focussing on contributing to the delivery of business objectives.
- Implement an information governance framework across the organisation, which will enable the consistent application of standards and the maximisation of system functionality to automate tasks wherever possible.
- Deliver cost effective solutions to managing information and records which seamlessly integrate with the organisation's core business processes.

Principles

The principles that will underpin delivery of the strategy are:

1. Information is an essential asset that requires effective management to fully maximise its potential for supporting the business and enable information-led, fully informed decision making.
2. Everyone within the organisation has a role in delivering information management.
3. Information is managed throughout its lifecycle to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. Wherever possible, best practice is used to further support business processes and make efficiency savings.
4. The right information is made internally available in the right place at the right time and shared with appropriate security controls.
5. Information is accurate and fit for purpose.

6. Our Council will strive towards transparency where appropriate, ensuring accurate and reliable information is readily available to service users. Information is re-used and shared externally where appropriate.
7. Our approach to information governance recognises the contributions of all the key teams, who will support delivery of the strategy.

Governance

The Council's relevant policies, procedures and guidance are regularly reviewed and will need to be aligned to the strategy at the time of review.

Roles and responsibilities for delivering the strategy, groups, and individuals:

- Communities Committee - responsible for the consideration and approval of the Records Management Plan and associated strategies and policies.
- Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) – Director of Economy and Resources, has senior management responsibility for information management in their role as SIRO. This includes supporting application of this strategy throughout the organisation.
- Information Management Group (IMG) - owners of this strategy and responsible for strategy implementation
- Heads of Service – Responsible for ensuring their staff support the implementation of this strategy.
- All Staff and Elected Members – Everyone within the organisation has a role in delivering information management.

Delivering the Strategy

The implementation of the strategy is ambitious and to be successful, the implementation needs to be delivered in phases. This document sets out the phases that are envisaged for successfully delivering the strategy for all information that has corporate value within the Council.

Delivery of the strategy will be multifaceted, although the following themes are integrated into each workstream:

- Directorates and Services will be confident that the project team have recognised any complexity that may exist in their processes and that it will be effectively managed during any change process
- There will be a focus on employees being able to adopt different working practices where required, ensuring that tangible and visible benefits are articulated as a rationale for change
- Risk will be proactively managed from the outset with project activities prioritised based on risk and how the change will support delivery of other organisational strategic objectives
- There will be early recognition of the resources and input required from organisational teams and steps will be taken to mitigate the impact while clearly and concisely communicating the implications of significant change

projects. This will include appropriate training for every employee, which will be appropriate to the role they have in managing organisational records

- Each workstream will have robust governance procedures that will provide a framework for delivery as well as quality assurance for change
- As stated in the vision, the ultimate deliverable will always be to seamlessly integrate information and records management requirements into the digital environment for employees and those working with the organisation.
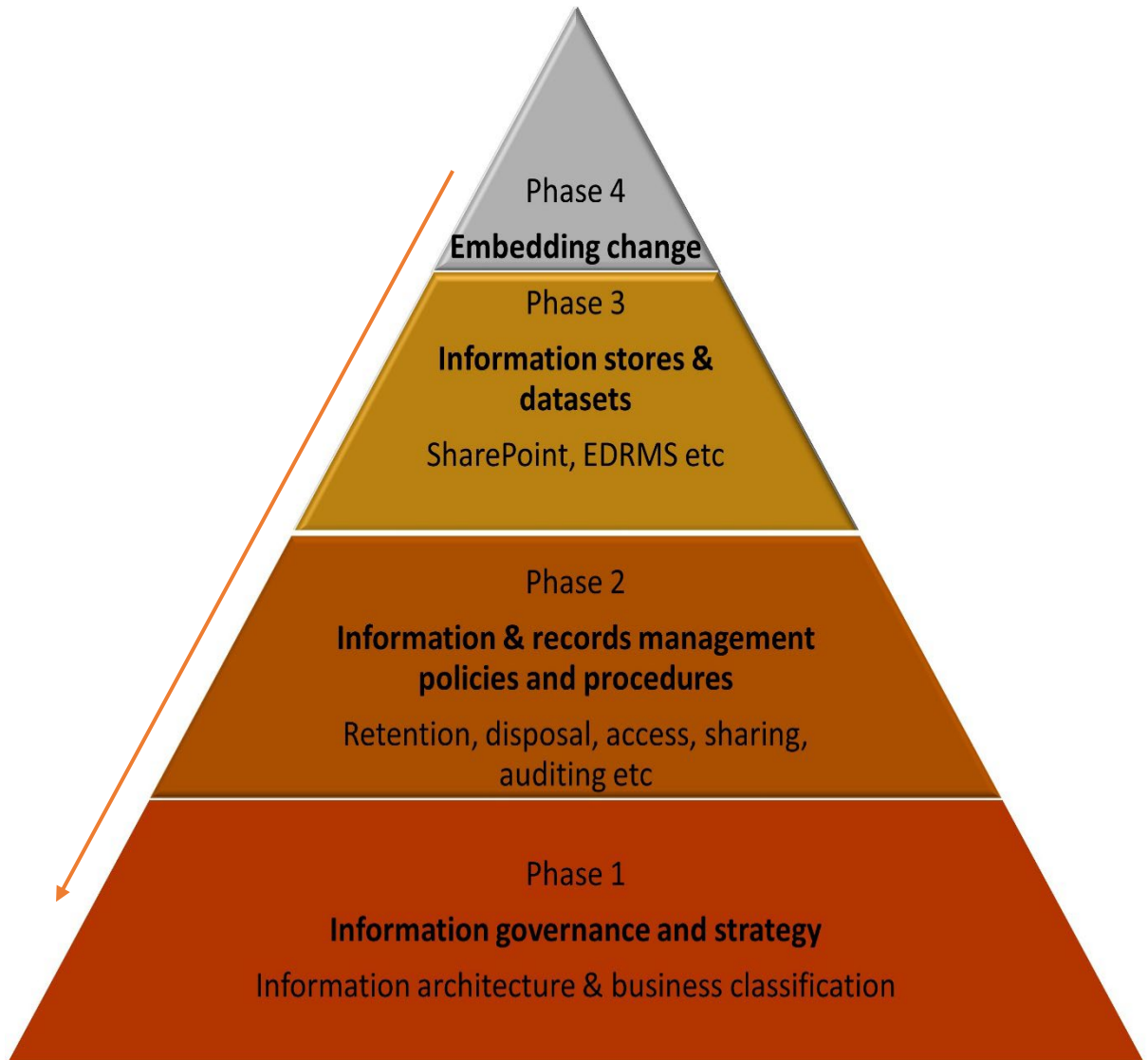
Strategy implementation will be in four phases with a number of projects required to successfully deliver the strategy's vision across the Council. These phases are represented on figure 1, which shows the strategic deliverables together with examples of tangible deliverables that will provide an indication of measurable progress. It should be noted that some projects will be designed to address multiple phases.

While there will be immediate benefits from delivering phases 1 and 2 in terms of creating an appropriate environment in which to deliver the strategy, phases 3 and 4 focus on achieving the long-term strategic objectives set out above. Phase 3 will focus on the practical implementation of good information governance across the Council, requiring the information governance framework to be applied across all Council systems and functions. This will be followed by a final phase that will address the need to fully embed the necessary cultural change and ensure new working practices become the accepted way of working.

Achieving the strategic objectives represents a major change programme for the Council and, at an organisational level, requires significant commitment as well as varying levels of input from staff across the Council.

The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and at that time, this section will be updated to reflect progress as well as highlight the key tasks that require delivery to achieve the objectives.

Figure 1 – Phases of Strategy Implementation

Phase One

The vision of the first phase of strategy implementation is to articulate an information governance framework that will:

- enable information held and processed by the Council to be effectively and consistently managed.
- allow information and records management tasks to be automated wherever possible.
- provide a robust and sustainable foundation for the delivery of subsequent phases, which will accommodate both anticipated and unforeseen change.

The first phase of strategy implementation will be completion of the business analysis required to implement information governance arrangements for Microsoft 365 and Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS).

Dumfries and Galloway Council are required under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 to prepare and implement a Records Management Plan (RMP) setting out proper arrangements for the management of their records. The implementation of an EDRMS to appropriately manage the Council's electronic data is a commitment set out within the Council's Records Management Plan, which was first approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland in 2014 and subsequently in 2019.

A high-level list of activities that will be required to deliver the first phase is at Appendix 1. All subsequent phases will require this phase to be complete before they can commence.

Phase Two

Phase two will deliver the required policies, procedures, and guidance to implement the information architecture. Completion of phase 2 is likely to be required for the majority of work in phase 3 although it is possible that projects linked to phase 3 will be progressed system by system and will therefore require different elements of phase 2 to be complete.

Phase Three

Phase three will carry out a review of information stores, datasets and systems currently used by the Councils to ensure appropriate records management is being applied where records lie out with the corporate EDRMS.

Phase Four

Phase four will fully embed the change within the Council. Embedding change is a journey rather than a destination and therefore this element runs through each of the four phases. The shift to an EDRMS for the Councils Electronic records will be a fundamental change to the culture of the organisation. Throughout all phases, opportunities to automate as many tasks as possible will be identified and implemented, with the final stage addressing any final actions required to fully implement the strategy.

Appendix 1 – Phase One Delivery

The first phase will focus on developing information governance frameworks that will facilitate delivery of the vision and the strategic objectives. The first phase of the work will be completed in financial year 2022/2023. The implementation plan will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and to update it as appropriate with the subsequent phases of delivery.

The key deliverables of phase 1 relate to fundamental requirements for information governance and will be delivered with the support of HJBS. The detailed plan for delivering the outputs is provided in the project documentation for this initial stage of the project and the deliverables are:

- A reviewed and updated information strategy

- A proposed information architecture that is robust, sustainable and can be used across the Council's information assets to show where information should be stored and how it will be managed

- Gap analysis of M365 information governance and records management capabilities and identification of work required to deliver compliance requirements

- Compliance audit of existing case management/record keeping systems

- Plan for migrating information to M365, identifying what information will be transferred, which M365 tools to use. Development of use cases for the M365 tools as appropriate

- High level governance proposals on controls for managing information within M365. Roadmap for implementation of subsequent phases including proposals for managing retention and disposal, management of metadata standards, security and permissions, and file plan.