Information & Records Management Policy

Date Adopted	Next Review	Officer Responsible
12 March 2026	1 June 2027	IM Lead

Policy Statement

Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) values information and records as strategic public assets. Creating and maintaining full and accurate records is a routine part of our work. Trustworthy, well-managed information supports effective operations, evidence-based decisions, transparency, and public accountability.

Policy Purpose:

This policy establishes the governance framework for how Rotorua Lakes Council manages information and records across their entire lifecycle. It ensures Council information is created, managed, protected, accessed, retained, and disposed of in a manner that supports legal compliance, operational efficiency, accountability, and long-term preservation.
This policy gives effect to Council's obligations under the Public Records Act 2005, and aligns with standards and guidance issued by Archives New Zealand and the Chief Archivist, as well as requirements under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and the Privacy Act 2020.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All RLC elected members, employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and authorised third parties.

- All information and records created, received, captured, stored, accessed, or maintained in the course of Council business, regardless of format, system, or location (including digital and physical records, cloud services, line-of-business apps, websites, collaboration platforms and ECM systems)

Information Management Framework

This policy operates as the governing document within Rotorua Lakes Council's Information Management (IM) framework.
Legislative compliance is achieved through the combined application of:

- this policy, which sets mandatory governance requirements; and
- Council approved standards, procedures, and guidance documents, which provide detailed operational instructions for staff.

Operational processes required to comply with legislative and regulatory obligations are documented in supporting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These SOPs are formally incorporated into the Information Management framework through reference in this policy and must be followed in conjunction with it.

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Principles

RLC adopts the principles of good IM/RM consistent with Archives NZ and ALGIM:

- Information is a strategic asset - created once, used many times, trustworthy, and protected.
- Governance & accountability - clear roles, executive sponsorship, and resourcing for IM/RM.
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty - information practices will reflect our obligations, including appropriate stewardship, access, and cultural considerations.
- Compliance by design - systems and processes embed PRA, LGOIMA, Privacy Act, and Archives NZ standards.
- Lifecycle management - information is created, captured, described (metadata), accessed, retained, and disposed of lawfully and consistently.
- Digital first & ECM-centered – Digital formats are prioritised, and ECM systems are the official recordkeeping environment. Shadow systems and unmanaged personal stores are not allowed.

Roles & Responsibilities

All Staff, Contractors, Consultants

- Create and maintain complete, accurate records in approved Council systems (e.g., ECM, Microsoft 365 with governance).
- Comply with all IM/RM procedures, standards, and guidelines.
- Use digital systems as the primary method for creating and capturing information
- Avoid unnecessary creation of paper records unless required

Supervisors & Managers (Information Asset Owners)

- Ensure staff are trained and meet IM/RM responsibilities.
- Embed IM/RM processes in work routines and system design.
- Ensure staff complete IM/RM obligations before leaving RLC.

Information Management Team

- Govern, maintain, and promote IM/RM policies, standards, plans, and roadmaps.
- Develop, maintain effective information and records management policies, standards, guidelines.
- Monitor compliance, provide training and ensure systems support lifecycle management.

Executive Leadership Team

- Support the embedding of IM/RM practices.
- Manage departmental information risks and enforce compliance.

Chief Executive

- Holds ultimate legislative accountability for compliance with PRA, LGOIMA, and Privacy requirements.

Policy Statements

Creation & Capture

- RLC will create and capture full, accurate, and reliable records of its business activities in approved Council systems as part of standard business practice.

Metadata & Description

- RLC will ensure information and records include the metadata necessary to support authenticity,

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reliability, usability, and accessibility in accordance with Archives New Zealand requirements.

Access & Official Information

- RLC will manage official information in accordance with the principle of availability and comply with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

Privacy & Confidentiality

- RLC will protect personal and confidential information in line with the Privacy Act 2020, ensuring all information is handled lawfully, fairly, securely, and with appropriate controls

Information Security

- RLC will safeguard information and records from unauthorised access, loss, misuse, or corruption through appropriate security measures consistent with Council policies and risk management practices.

Storage (Digital & Physical)

- RLC will ensure information and records are stored safely and appropriately for as long as required.
    - Digital records will be stored in approved, secure Council systems that support integrity, accessibility, and lifecycle management.
    - Physical records will be stored in appropriate storage areas that meet required environmental, security, and preservation standards in accordance with Archives New Zealand's Standard.
    - Physical records selected for digitisation must be handled and scanned in accordance with approved standards to ensure the resulting digital record is authentic, reliable, and accessible

Retention & Disposal

- RLC will retain and dispose of information and records in accordance with the Public Records Act 2005 and authorised retention and disposal schedules.
- RLC will preserve information of long-term value and ensure archival records are managed in line with Archives New Zealand requirements and statutory obligations.

Systems & Technology

- RLC will ensure that information and records management requirements are embedded into the design, procurement, and operation of all systems and services that create or manage Council information.

Cloud & Third-party Services

- RLC will require cloud and third-party service providers to meet Council's information, records management, privacy, and security obligations.

Digitisation & Scanning

- RLC will ensure that any scanning or digitisation of physical records is carried out in accordance with approved Council standards
- Source paper records may only be destroyed after digitisation where authorised under the Public Records Act 2005 and where digitisation meets Council-approved standards, ensuring the digital record is complete, reliable, usable, and stored in an approved system.

Related Standards, Legislation & Guidance

- Archives NZ Information & Records Management Standard
- Public Records Act 2005.
- Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
- Privacy Act 2020

Compliance

Full compliance with this Information and Records Management Policy is required.

Definitions

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- Information: Knowledge created, processed, communicated, or received.
- Record: Information that provides evidence of business activity, regardless of format.
- Lifecycle:
  Creation/receipt → maintenance & use → storage → disposal or long-term preservation.
- Disposal: Authorised transfer, destruction, discharge, or other authorised action under the PRA
- Digitisation: process of creating an accurate and complete digital copy of a physical record..

This policy is supported by Council-approved standards, procedures, and guidance, as outlined in Appendix A.

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Appendix A: Information Management Framework – Policy and Supporting Documents

Purpose

This appendix outlines how Rotorua Lakes Council's Information & Records Management Policy is supported by approved standards and procedures to ensure legislative compliance and effective operational implementation.

Framework Structure

Tier	Document Type	Role in Compliance
Tier 1	Information & Records Management Policy	Governance, principles, obligations
Tier 2	Standards & SOPs	Operational instructions and controls
Tier 3	Systems & Tools	Enable consistent practice and auditability

Supporting Standards and Procedures

key supporting documents include:

- Managing Information Guide – provides staff guidance on saving, using, sharing, naming, and managing information in approved systems. (ECM Doc Set ID – 3244065)
- Destruction of Source Documents After Digitisation – Staff Guide – sets out legal requirements, quality standards, and controls for digitisation and lawful destruction of hardcopy records. (ECM Doc Set ID – 22621304)
- Titling Standards – defines consistent naming conventions to support findability, access, and reuse of information. (ECM Doc Set ID – 3253861)
- Transfer Records to Archive Form – governs the authorised transfer of records with long-term or short-term value. ECM Doc Set ID - 2427279)
- Privacy Impact Assessment - A privacy impact assessment (PIA) is a way for organisations to assess and address privacy risks when they're collecting, using, or sharing personal information.
- Records Storage Standards – Provides instructions under PRA to manage the physical records with adequate protection and reservation (ECM Doc Set ID – 22700227) Retention and Disposal schedule - A retention and disposal schedule is a legally approved document that defines how long records must be kept and when they may be lawfully destroyed or archived. (ECM Doc Set ID – 1130523)
- Disposal Process – Defines the approval process for document destruction (ECM Doc Set ID - 20311883
- ECM user guides and Tips and Tricks - How to do system guides and ECM tips and tricks

These documents are maintained by the Information Management Team and must be followed in conjunction with this policy.

Governance Assurance

This framework ensures:

- clear separation between governance and operational detail
- alignment with Archives New Zealand and Chief Archivist expectations
- flexibility to update procedures without frequent policy change

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- consistent and auditable compliance with legislative obligations

Summary

- The Information & Records Management Policy operates as a stable governance instrument, supported by Council approved SOPs that provide staff with clear, practical instructions for compliance.

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