Herefordshire Council

Reference number	
Approved by	**Information Governance Steering Group**
Date approved	
Version	**1.04**
Last Revised	**January 2019**
Review date	**January 2022**
Category	**Records Management**
Owner	**Information Governance Team**
Who should read this	**All employees of Herefordshire Council**

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
VERSION CONTROL PROCEDURE

After the Review Date has expired, this document may not be up-to-date. Please contact the document owner to check the status after the Review Date shown above.

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please contact the document owner.

Contents

1. Purpose of this procedure

The purpose of a version control procedure is to identify the most up-to-date document and to establish its status in terms of being a working copy or released for its designed use. Version control also allows identification as to how a document differs from its predecessor. In this way, it helps to establish the validity of a document, and to prevent publication of something still in draft form. This is important in the Council's day-to-day operation and decision-making, and also for meeting requirements under information legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and information sharing with other organisations. Document development can also be tracked more easily with a version control standard applied.

2. Who does this procedure apply to?

This procedure applies to:

- Everyone in the Council involved in creating and/or managing documents.
- Everyone in the Council responsible for maintaining reference sets of policies and procedures, or for ensuring that staff are aware of policies, procedures and protocols to be followed.
- Everyone in the Council involved in information management

It does not apply to software control, which follows a different established convention.

3. Process for version control

The system below must be used to mark which version stage a document is at:

0.01   First draft

0.02   Second draft

0.03   Third draft

1.0   First final version – put to its designed use after all editing and consultation is finished

1.01   An update of version 1.0, not yet released as more editing may be required

1.02   Second update draft, not yet released as more editing may be required

1.1   A minor update to the first final version, put to its' designed use after all editing and consultation is finished, and approved and released.

1.11   A draft update to version 1.1, not yet released as more editing may be required

1.2   A second minor update to the first final version, put to its' designed use after all editing and consultation is finished, and approved and released.

2.0   A major update – final version put to its' designed use after all editing and consultation is finished

Each approved revised version of a document or record will result in an increment to the number after the decimal place, unless the minor revision number exceeds 5 or the changes made to the main version of the document exceeds 25%, in which case the main version number should be incremented by 1.

4. Where to include version on a document

The version of the document should be included in the following areas:

- A page at the back of documents such as corporate policies, plans, strategies, procedures, protocols and project management documentation, listing information including the copyright and security classification. In this area, all previous versions of the document should be listed along with an indication of what changes have been made to provide evidence of updates to the document before or after their approval. A version number on its own will not give this information. This is commonly known as the change history section of the document.

An example of a completed version log is given below.

Version Log

Version	Status	Date	Description of Change	Reason For Change	Pages affected
0.01	Draft	2007-08-14	Creation of document		
0.02	Draft	2007-08-23	Amendments	General – Work in Progress	Appendix A
0.03	Draft	2007-10-10	Amendments	General – Work in Progress	Appendix B
0.04	Draft	2007-10-25	Amendments	General – Work in Progress	all
0.05	Draft	2007-10-29	Amendments	General – Work in Progress	all
0.06	Draft	2007-11-02	Amendments	General – Work in Progress	all
0.07	Draft	2007-12-02	Additions	Executive summary; Key recommendations	1
1.0	First Final Version	2008-12-01	Approved	-	-

- On the front page of a document, with the author and date approved or released for comment.

- On the footer of a document with the date of the creation of the new version.

- Metadata for documents placed on the internet or intranet. Metadata has been described as "data about data". It is information linked to a document that describes properties about that document such as the author, the title, and keywords for searches to be carried out on. This supports electronic information discovery and retrieval by, for example improving search options and results. The Organisational Information Model details common metadata which should be applied to help with this. For version control, metadata should be the version number and the version status.

  An example of metadata entered into the Properties box of a Word document is shown below. Further information on how to enter metadata is given in the Council guidance document, "Making your documents easier to find in InfoLibrary" at the bottom of the Web Support page of the Council intranet (http://intranet/intranet/content/3505.asap

5. Storage of previous versions

Once a document is updated and a new version replaces it, it may be necessary to retain the previous version for a period of time. Reasons for retention may be due to administrative use, or to provide evidence that a specific policy or procedure was stated and communicated, or in case there is a claim and the Council needs to demonstrate what the policy and practice was at that time. Final versions of documents with historical value which are superseded by another final version may need to be transferred to the Herefordshire Record Office for long-term preservation.

In all cases, the retention period for keeping documents and the action to take at the end of that period must be stated within the Council's retention schedules and adhered to. Once a document is superseded by a new version, and has to be retained for a period of time, it should be marked as obsolete, to prevent use by anyone who does not realise that there is a more up-to-date version. New versions should be marked with the next version number, and where a newer version is being worked upon, and an older version is still available, a note should be placed on the older copy stating that the document is under review and who to contact for more information.

If published on the intranet or internet the content management system will automatically keep a version of the earlier document when the filename is unchanged, in its asset manager. This is necessary so that there is an evidential trail of information that has been made available to staff or the public at any given time. Therefore, the electronic filename for *current* documents on the intranet or internet should not include the version detail.

6. Monitoring compliance with this procedure

The Information Governance Team will monitor compliance with these procedures during information security audits. The council should consider creating capacity for regular record surveys to be carried out by qualified records managers.

7. Other relevant policies / council documents

This procedure should be read alongside the following documents:

- Records Management Policy
- Protective Marking Policy
- Organisational Information Model
- File Naming Procedure

8. Compliance

Failure to follow this procedure for version control may result in the wrong version being acted upon with damaging consequences and/or time and resources being wasted. Officers who do not use version control could face disciplinary action, depending on the level of risk associated with an out-of-date procedure being followed, as it will be considered as a performance or capability matter requiring investigation.

Existing supplies of paper documents should be used up where possible before going to print with new versions, for example, if there is only a change in the design of a form. If there is a risk of incorrect or misleading information still circulating, the new version should be used immediately.

9. Impact on the Council's Key Priorities

This procedure is designed to ensure that where documents are drawn up to give effect to the Council's priorities, it is easy to identify the most up-to-date version, and to track its development. This links to the corporate objective in the Community Strategy for Herefordshire.

10. Training and awareness requirements

Once approved, all officers and members will be made aware of the existence of this procedure through the standard communications channels of the Council. Any significant updates to this procedure will be communicated using the same channels.

11. Review Date

This procedure will be reviewed after three years by the Information Governance Team.

Document Classification

Author Name and Role	Anthony Sawyer (Customer Services Information and Records Manager)
Date Created	2008-03-12
Date Issued	
Description	Procedure for applying version control to documents
File Name	Version_Control_Procedure
Format	Microsoft Word / 2003
FOI/EIR Disclosure	Yes
Geographic Coverage	Herefordshire
Group Access	Public
Language	Eng
Master Location	<Intranet Info Library>
Publisher	Herefordshire Council
Rights Copyright	Copyright of Herefordshire Council
Security Classification	Public
Status	Consultation
Subject	information management: records management: version control
Title	Version Control Procedure
Type	Procedure

Consultation Log

Date sent for consultation	
Consultees	Herefordshire Council

Approval Log

		Date
To be agreed by	Director Economy Communities and Corporate	
To be approved by	Information Governance Steering Group	
To be reviewed by:	Information Governance Team	

Version Log

Version	Status	Date	Description of Change	Reason For Change	Pages affected
0.01	Draft	12/03/08	Creation of document		
0.02	Draft	14/07/08	Amendments	Comments from Alan McLaughlin, James O'Grady, Sonia Rees, Christian Smith, Alan Stokes, Madeleine Spinks, Steve Martin, Ellen Pawley, Dominique Wright, Karen Wells	All
1.01	Draft	02/05/13	Review and update	Review by Assistant Records Manager	All
1.02	Draft	16/05/13	Review	Review by IGPO	All
1.03	Draft	01/01/16	Review	Review by Information and Records Manager	All
1.04	Draft	01/2019	Review	Review by Records Manger	all