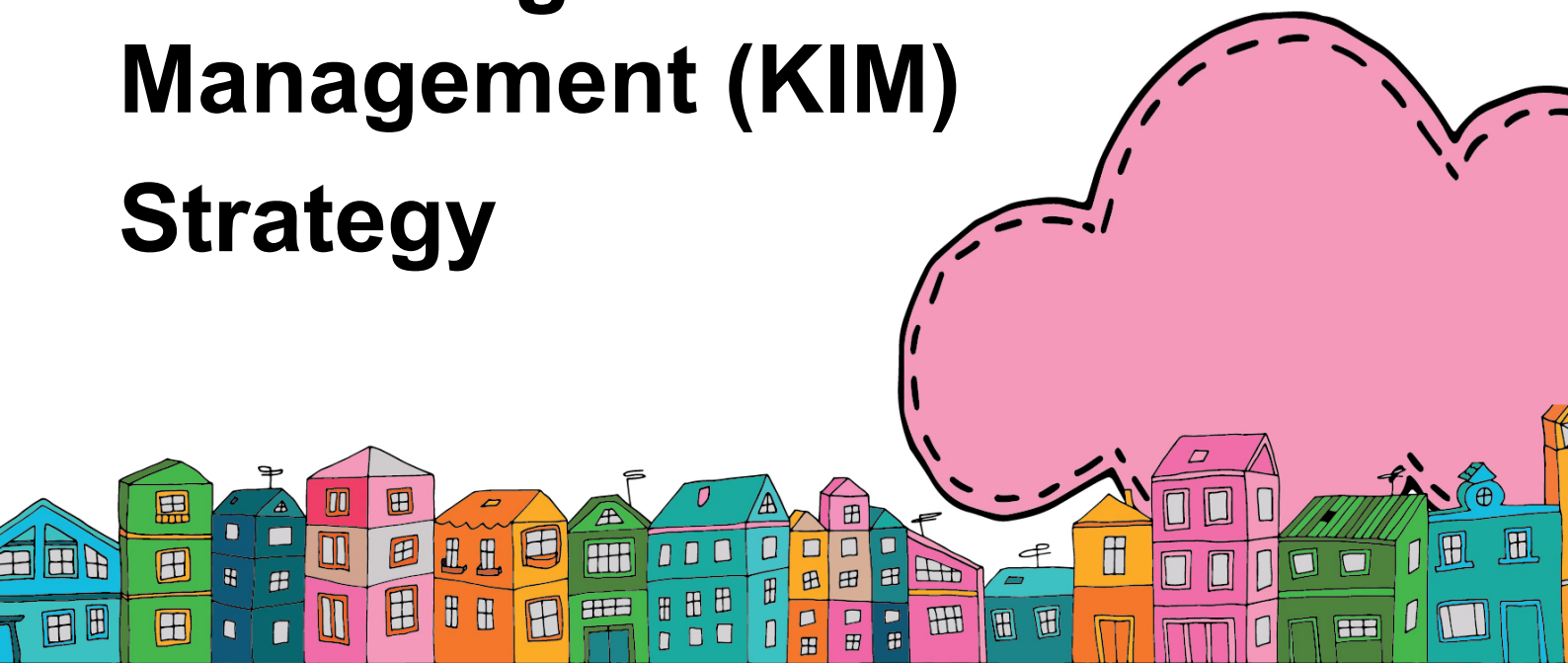


Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) Strategy



Supporting the creation, management, storage,
analysis and use of information and data

1. Introduction

What is Knowledge and Information Management

- 1.1 Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) is an umbrella term that encompasses all the systems and processes within an organisation that support the creation, management, storage, analysis and use of information and data.
- 1.2 The definition of KIM is necessarily wide ranging in its scope and therefore this Strategy will be wide ranging and will be a long-term strategy that brings about wholesale culture change through greater understanding of the importance of information and data, supported by the appropriate investment in technology and the upskilling of people.

What is the Aim of the KIM Strategy

- 1.3 The aim of this Knowledge and Information Management Strategy (the Strategy) is to provide a framework for Neighbourhoods and Housing (N&H) to use to assess all its information and data looking at how it is collected, managed, stored, analysed and used and using this assessment to develop plans to improve how information and data is collected, managed, stored, this will lead to its better analysis and use and allow N&H to manage the risks associated with poorly collected, managed, stored, analysed and used information and data.
- 1.4 The Strategy aligns with N&H mission which is:

“Delivering neighbourhood and housing services which meet the changing needs of residents and strengthen their local communities”.

- 1.5 The Strategy meets N&H values which are:
- **People First** - We strive to improve the quality of life for all people and families.
 - **Respect** - We treat everyone with respect, integrity, honesty, and fairness.
 - **Learning** - We are curious and open to different ideas; we value feedback and constructive challenge.
 - **Ambition** - We are ambitious for our city and push the boundaries of what we can achieve.
 - **Partnership** - We work closely together across communities, the council and with our partners.

Why is Change Needed

- 1.6 Our key drivers for change are:
- Improved service delivery
 - Improved decision making
 - Service efficiencies through the above
 - Compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements
- 1.7 Lessons learnt from complaints and from maladministration cases within N&H, indicate that poor KIM plays a key factor and poor KIM across social housing providers can cause real human detriment for tenants and residents including financial and wellbeing. The Housing Ombudsman Service has identified information and data issues in their spotlight report on Knowledge and Information Management, these are listed at Appendix A.



- 1.8 Having an effective Strategy means N&H can target its resources, give greater clarity to both tenants and residents and staff, and reduce the reputational risk for N&H as well as the number and type of complaints.
- 1.9 Operating an effective Strategy will enable N&H to meet its regulatory requirements as good KIM benefits N&H, its tenants and residents.
- 1.10 Having an effective Strategy will ultimately improve service delivery.
- 1.11 KIM however, is much more than just technology, it includes upskilling and supporting people, developing robust processes to be followed, and investing in the right technology. KIM is about ensuring N&H know what information and data exist on a particular subject, how it is created, where it is located, how it is stored, who owns it, what it can be used for, who should access it, how long it should be retained and when it should be destroyed. It is about our overall control and utilisation of our information and data resources.
- 1.12 N&H recognises the importance of information and data use every day and information and data are critical to every part of N&H's business. N&H's information and data comes in many different forms including minutes, notes and statistics. It also includes operational information and data such as compliance certificates, lists of property attributes and repairs information and data. It also covers personal information and data, such as protected characteristics, needs and vulnerabilities as well as information and data in relation to names and addresses and contact details.
- 1.13 Additionally, N&H is part of Hull City Council and works with a wide range of partner organisations that all create information and data, that N&H accesses and uses but are not owned by N&H. Such information and data is often business critical and will need to be considered as the Strategy develops.
- 1.14 The aim of any Strategy therefore must be to understand these issues through an assessment of information and data sources locally and mitigate / eradicate them over time. The above individually and collectively present a risk when trying to support customers, deliver people and property services, respond to Freedom of Information and / or Subject Access requests. It prevents N&H from utilising existing information and data to its full potential and as a result N&H is less effective than it otherwise could be.
- 1.15 N&H success is reliant on having clear reasoning and processes for its information and data, having information and data that is accurate and available to use. It is critical for N&H to be able to access information and data to fulfil its objectives, deliver improved services and increase its communication with its customers while managing and protecting the information and data appropriately to ensure N&H comply with legislative requirements.
- Implementation of the Strategy
- 1.16 N&H recognise KIM is essentially about culture change and is a long-term commitment, changing the way everyone thinks about information and data by valuing it as an asset and vital insight tool rather than a by-product of service delivery. The Strategy and other allied policies and procedures rely on staff to implement them, and this will change the way staff perform their roles in the collection, storage, analysis and use information and data.



- 1.17 In delivering this Strategy N&H will be changing habits. There may be uncertainty and challenges around doing things differently whilst still complying with legislation and regulations, through a consistent and joined-up approach, which focusses on achieving a wide range of benefits for all stakeholders, N&H will work collaboratively and with common purpose to realise its aims.
- 1.18 The true value of information and data can only be fully realised when it is fit for purpose, collected, and recorded in standardised formats, stored in modern, future proof systems, and held in a condition that means it is findable, accessible, and usable. More details on N&H aspirations are given in Appendix B.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Strategy covers all the information and data held in all the business areas of N&H, namely Access and Wellbeing, Area and Neighbourhood Management, Building Safety, Business Development and Change, Housing Investment Service and Strategy Market Intelligence and Growth.
- 2.2 Some information and data systems are external and on an individual basis will be considered as both part of the scope of individual policies and procedures that are developed. In addition, some information and data is not public facing or will directly impact upon operational service delivery across N&H but the principles in this Strategy still apply.

3. Legislative and Service Delivery Context

- 3.1 The following provides the legislative and service delivery context for the KIM Strategy:
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
 - Data Protection Act 2018 (included the UK General Data Protection Regulation)
 - Environmental Information Regulations 2004
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015
 - The Chartered Institute of Housing's Professional Standards requiring housing professionals to provide information and advice based on evidence and accurately presenting the options and facts. It states that meeting this standard in practice will rely on good record creation and management.
 - The Information Commissioner's Office Code of Practice including good practice recommendations on records management.
 - The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's guide for care providers on good record keeping. (While the focus is on records in the provision of health and social care services, the Housing Ombudsman considers the principles to be applicable to housing and property management).

4. Relevant Consumer Standards and the Housing Ombudsman Service

- 4.1 The following are the relevant Consumer Standards for the KIM Policy:
- [Neighbourhood and Community](#)
 - [Safety and Quality](#)
 - [Tenancy](#)
 - [Transparency Influence and Accountability](#)



- 4.2 The Housing Ombudsman Service published a Spotlight Report on Knowledge and Information Management in May 2023. They believe getting knowledge and information management (KIM) right is *“the closest thing the sector could get to a silver bullet.”*
- 4.3 N&H self-assessed against the 21 recommendations made by the Housing Ombudsman in the Spotlight Report and the self-assessment highlighted the need to develop a KIM Strategy and has helped shape the KIM Strategy.

5. Definitions and Terminology

Customer	For this strategy, the customer refers to the tenants and other household members living in property where N&H delivers services, this includes leaseholders, private owners, and renters
Data	A range of facts, numbers and statistics collected to be examined, considered, and used to inform decision making. Data can be stored in multiple ways
Housing Ombudsman Service	An independent, impartial, and free service for social housing tenants. The Housing Ombudsman Service investigates complaints and the outcome of investigations which may include remedies, orders, and recommendations.
Information	Data is processed, organised, structured, or presented in each context to make it useful. Information can be stored in multiple ways. Information also covers, minutes, documents and other written sources
Information Governance	The framework for handling information in a secure and confidential manner that allows organisations and individuals to manage information legally, securely, efficiently, and effectively.
Information Management	The function of managing the organisation’s information and data resources. It includes creating, capturing, registering, classifying, indexing, storing, sharing, retrieving, providing, using, and disposing of information assets in the most efficient and effective way. The most effective form of information management is digitally in IT systems
Insight	Provided by modelling data and using visualisations to tell a story about why something has happened. The past, present and future are incorporated into analysing data to produce insight. Insight includes the ability for users to filter data, allowing exploration of scenarios.
Knowledge	Is an awareness of facts or the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject
NEC	NEC is N&H housing management systems, that is the software and technology solutions that help landlords manage their properties.
Neighbourhoods and Housing	Includes the following service areas, Access and Wellbeing, Area and Neighbourhood Management, Building Safety, Business Development and Change, Contracting and Investment and Strategy Market Intelligence and Growth



Policy	A document which outlines a statement, aims, values, position, practices, approach, rules, and/or guidelines to a particular situation. An effective policy should set out what we are doing and why
Regulator of Social Housing	The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) regulates for a viable, efficient, and well governed social housing sector that is able to deliver quality homes and services for current and future tenants. It does this by setting standards and carrying out robust regulation focusing on driving improvement in social landlords and take appropriate action if the outcomes of the standards are not being delivered.
Strategy	A plan of actions that fit together to reach a clear destination. The destination will be detailed through Policies

6. Key Principles of KIM

Key Areas to Consider

6.1 The following six key areas need to be considered within KIM as key principles:

- Why knowing customers is important
- Why knowing properties is important
- Why understanding all current data sources and developing a single version of the truth is important
- Why combining customer and property information and data is important
- Why fit for purpose information and data is critical
- Understanding and managing risk

6.2 Knowing Our Customers

6.2.1 The Regulator for Social Housing expects registered providers to have robust information and data about their customers and keep this information up to date to understand and act upon their diverse needs, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, communication needs, and additional support requirements. However, this information and data is not fixed and part of the KIM Strategy and associated policies and procedures will need to reflect the fluid nature of information and data as it changes. This is particularly relevant to people data, e.g. as someone ages or their health changes or the household composition changes.

6.2.2 The Regulator for Social Housing wants housing providers to work with their customers to collect the information they need and clearly explain how it will be used to improve their homes and services, particularly through reasonable adjustments.

6.2.3 Customers should be able to access services at any time of the day, on any device, whether it is a tablet, phone, or PC. This information and data should be quick and easily available to customers. Additionally, customers should be able to update their own information on NEC Housing, for example, using current and future apps.

6.2.4 This has many benefits, it reduces telephone enquiries, increases efficient savings, improves customer satisfaction, and fully integrates with NEC Housing without the need for re-keying data or costly integration projects. This will free up staff for dealing with more complex cases.



6.3 Knowing Our Homes

6.3.1 As part of the current Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, N&H need to ensure that customers' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Governments Decent Homes Guidance. N&H must have up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of its homes that reliably informs the provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for its customers. N&H need to hold information and data on stock condition and ensure the following:

- Compliance with Health and Safety Legal Regulations
- Compliant with the Decent Homes Standard
- Delivery of repairs, maintenance, and planned improvements to our stock
- Allocating homes with adaptations appropriately

6.4 Understanding our Data and Information and a Single Version of the Truth

6.4.1 N&H information and data come in many different forms; minutes, statistics, policies, research, operational and personal information, and data.

6.4.2 This Strategy aspires as a key part of developing the current position to develop a catalogue that covers all the key sources of information and data that it holds in terms of its:

- Collection
- Management
- Storage
- Analysis
- Usage

6.4.3 In computerised business management, the single version of the truth is a technical concept describing the ideal of having either a single centralised database, or at least where this is possible and practical synchronised databases, which stores all an organisation's information and data in a consistent form.

6.4.4 Following compilation of the catalogue outlined above, NEC Housing offers N&H the opportunity to develop single version of the truth principles.

6.5 Combining Data to Deliver Services

6.5.1 N&H knowing its Council homes and customers are separate areas for consideration in this Strategy and supporting Policies and Procedures, however there are significant overlaps that need to be addressed. The Housing Ombudsman in the recommendations in its KIM Spotlight Report gives numerous examples where social housing providers not knowing its customers meant that they could not deliver services, nor, because they were not able to access their customers' homes gather information and data on their homes.

6.5.2 If information about both the customer and the property can be viewed together within one housing management system, N&H can use it to understand and segment its customer base better to make sure services are personalised.

6.6 Fit for Purpose Information and Data



- 6.6.1 Fit-for-purpose information and data is not the same thing as perfect information and data. Compromises sometimes need to be made, for example to balance the frequency of reporting with the time and resources taken to produce the data.
- 6.6.2 Fit-for-purpose information and data must be accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant, complete, usable, and supplied by trained people to ensure that it meets the purposes for which it is intended. See Appendix C for more information.
- 6.7 Understanding and Managing Risk
- 6.7.1 Risks affects all aspects of N&H and its service delivery. The risks inherent with data and information refer to its collection management, storage, analysis and use in accordance with the law and regulatory requirements
- 6.7.2 The risks that need to be managed regarding KIM are the same as those that apply across all areas of service delivery and include:
1. Technology failure
 2. Computer security
 3. Cyber attacks
 4. Health and safety
 5. Safeguarding
 6. Legal
 7. Regulatory
 8. Reputational
 9. Operational
- 6.7.3 The latter five risks are ones that will need close N&H management and mitigation. Developing and implementing a KIM Strategy will allow for risk mitigation.
- NEC Housing
- 6.8 N&C's council housing services use NEC Housing that provides a flexible, reliable repository for information and data.
- 6.9 Many areas within NEC Housing would benefit from improvement, additional modules need implementing to reduce the use of having various standalone systems and workarounds such as spreadsheets which are often used as interim solutions. Therefore, there is a requirement to streamline systems and bring everything practicably possible onto one platform, NEC Housing, to enable all Council housing management data to be held in one place for easy access for officers, and to reduce the risk of non-compliance with health and safety, and not meeting the Housing Regulators requirements.
- 6.10 Whilst NEC Housing is N&H's Council Housing Management system. Other systems are used, some of which could be replaced by moving information and data into NEC Housing. Other information and data systems offer solutions for N&H business areas that would not fit into NEC Housing but are overall N&H business critical within N&H
- 6.11 Some information and data systems N&H use are external to N&H (contractor and other Hull City Council business units) but will need to be considered as part of this Strategy as they often feed into or run parallel to N&H information and data systems. Getting the most out of information and data will require such systems to be considered. However,



these systems will remain external to and move to use NEC as the main repository of N&H information.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 N&H believe that information and data is the responsibility of all officers, and all officers have a defined set of responsibilities in relation to information and data.

Executive Director of Housing and Communities

7.2 Ultimately the Executive Director of Housing and Communities is responsible for all areas of the service and service delivery.

Policy Sponsor, Holder, and Coordinator

7.3 N&H have adopted a template for reviewing its Policies that creates three roles

- Sponsor – Usually a Head of Service within N&H who is responsible for championing and the ultimate delivery of the Strategy
- Holder – A senior manager with service area specialism who will take the day-to-day role of overseeing the development of a Strategy and Procedures and ensuring the implementation of the Strategy and Procedures
- Coordinator – Usually a member of the team who will undertake day to day activities to develop the Strategy and Procedures using the template agreed by the Senior Management Team

Information and Data Managers

7.4 Information and Data Managers need to be established within N&H and will implement the Procedures that are developed taking ownership and been responsible for their information and data.

Information and Data Creators, Storsers, Analysers and Users

7.5 Information and data creators, storsers, analysers and users will need to follow the Procedures that are developed for the creation, storage, management and use of information and data

Procedure Assurance Providers

7.6 To ensure that the Strategy and Procedure are being implemented properly and are working as envisaged, they will need to be policed to provide the Sponsor, Holder, Senior Management Team, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Housing and the Regulator with assurance.

8. Current Practice

8.1 It is important to note that the development of a KIM Strategy is not being done from a standing start for N&H. N&H are already aware of the importance of information and data and as such some progress has already been made and some areas for improvement have been identified and actioned The Strategy expands on a range of activities that are already underway within N&H bringing these together in one place so that we can begin to connect these activities at a service level and make the most of the data and information that N&H holds.

8.4 Each series of actions in the Project Plan will be bespoke to the information and data source, however it is recognised that there will be overlaps in the technological, process



and people actions and that changes to technology in particular, must be accompanied by clear processes and training on these processes, which will promote ownership and define roles and responsibilities.

9. Training

- 9.1 Changing the way staff perform their role in the collection, storage, analysis and use information and data will require training staff on the new ways of working relating to each information and data source. This will need immediate and follow up training of both a staff cohort and individuals.

10. Compliance, Monitoring, and Impact Assessment of the Change

Ongoing Strategy development and Procedure implementation

- 10.1 The development of the Strategy is the starting point for N&H and the development of an AS IS position for all information and data sources which will allow an associated TO BE position to be developed. This will then likely lead to the development both of overarching Policies and Procedures that can be used on all a number of information and data sources (particularly in relation to NEC) and individual Policies and Procedures that refer to specific / unique information and data sources

Monitoring and Assurance

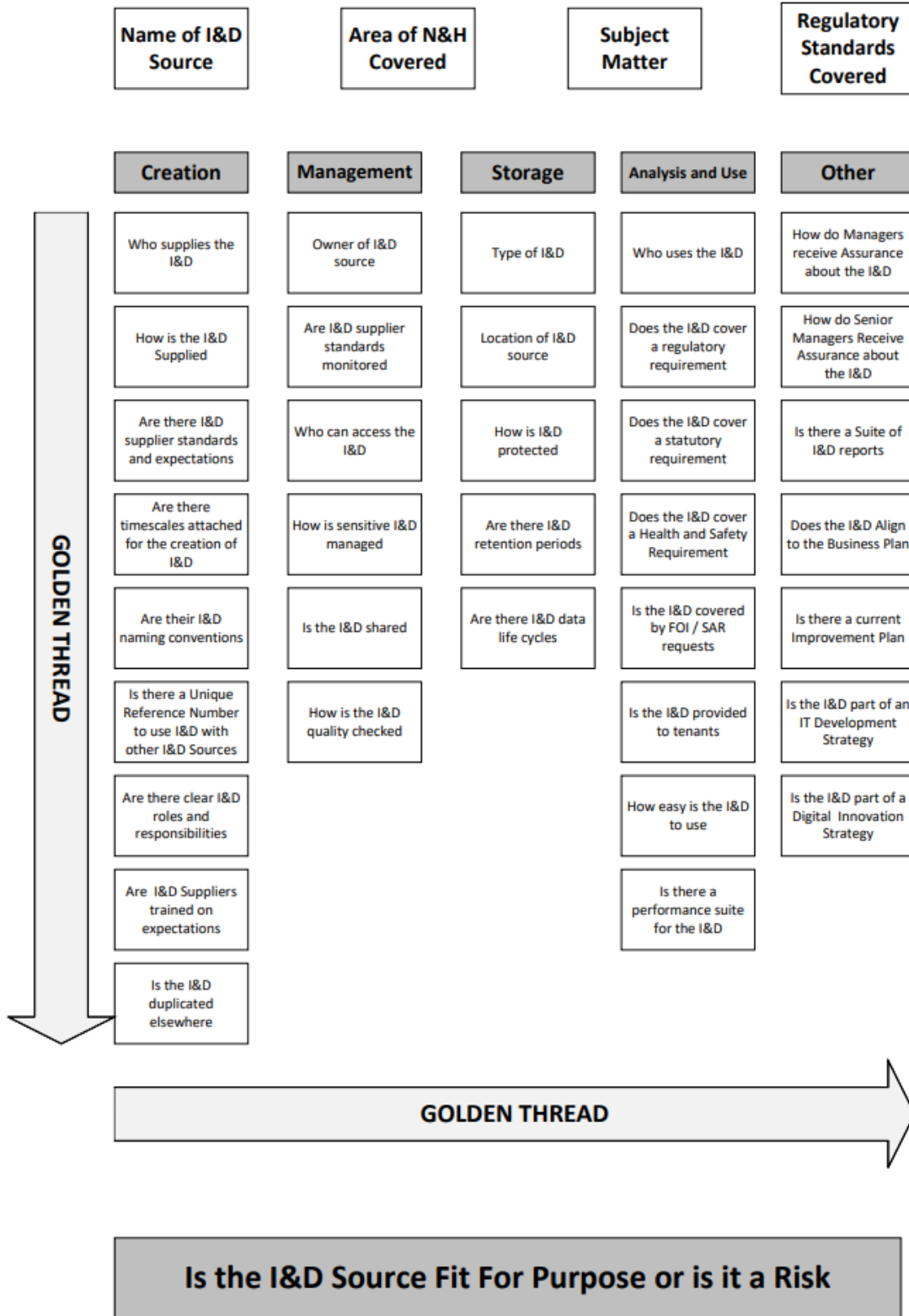
- 10.2 As part of any Strategy and Procedures an assurance framework and key performance indicators will need to be developed and implemented as who will perform this role for N&H, either centrally or within service areas.

11. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 11.1 Hull is an area of increasing diversity which brings positive benefits to us all. It is essential that we consider this diversity to ensure everyone has equal chances to live, work, learn and feel part of a community free from prejudice, discrimination, and harassment. We aim to improve the customer experience by delivering a more personalised, fair, and inclusive service. We will use the information we hold to identify where we need to intervene, adapt our services to do something different and to understand the potential impact of our policies.
- 11.2 The Council is committed to providing services which embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We recognise the importance of KIM as a tool for compliance with the Equality and Diversity Act 2010. Using the Councils Equality Impact Analysis Screening Tool, shows that the Strategy will have an overall positive impact by making greater use of data to improve the delivery of services through improved quality, accessibility, and control over data. The potential for the Strategy to cause a negative impact will be kept under review as the data, digital and technological environment progresses, so that mitigations can be put in place where necessary.
- 11.3 A Equality Screening exercise was conducted of this Strategy and indicates that all customers and potential customers will not be disadvantaged by the implementation of this Strategy.

Drawing 1





Appendix A - Information and Data Issues in the Social Rented Sector



The Housing Ombudsman Service in its Spotlight Report on Knowledge and Information Management and N&H in turn recognise that information and data:

- Is not always been recorded or protected appropriately
- Can be misplaced
- Can get lost through staff turnover
- Is not easy to search for or find
- Can be saved in officer's own work areas
- Can sometimes still be paper based
- Can be recorded inconsistently both in format and location
- Can lack common unique identifiers
- Can lack standardised naming conventions for records and files
- Can be inaccurate, misspelt, misnumbered, or out of date
- Can be unknowingly duplicated
- Can have no retention schedules assigned to it
- Can be collected and retained without regard to its legitimate use under the law

Appendix B – Strategic Aspirations

This Strategy aims to enable information and data informed decision making across N&H. By valuing information and data as a strategic asset, N&H can create a culture where information and data are integral to the delivery of excellent services. This Strategy creates a golden thread from information and data collection through to operational consumption and destruction. The Strategy seeks to ensure everyone in N&H understands their role in information and data management: Appendix B

- Reduce the use of standalone systems where this is under the management and control of N&H using NEC as the basis for information and data storage
- Reduce delays and duplication through the reduction in disparate information and data systems to consolidate a single version of the truth, where possible within NEC
- Improve quality through application of consistent procedures
- Be consistent in the way it holds and records information and data within all systems to improve information and data quality
- Have a strong functional structures and clear division of responsibilities for the varied teams that control and process information and data
- Have trained people who are able to
 - Create information and data in the right way in the right area of the right system following set principles
 - Manage information and data following set principle
 - Store information and data following set principles
 - Use information and data relevant to their role
 - Analyse information and data using tools and techniques that people are trained on
- Empower all officers to be responsible for information and data management, recognising the importance of having accurate and accessible information and data to assist them and others, through training and support to deliver clear set out expectations
- Expand NEC My Housing Online, to allow our customers to access and maintain their own data, with the ability to view their service requests, progress, and outcomes, including the principle that they should only have to tell us something one for it to be used widely



Appendix C – Good Information and Data

Good information and data should be:

- **Accurate** – Information and data should be sufficiently accurate for its intended purposes. Accuracy is most likely to be secured if information and data is captured as close to the point of activity as possible. It should be captured once only, although it may have multiple uses
- **Valid** – Information and data should be recorded in an agreed format and used in compliance with recognised standards. Where proxy information and data are used to compensate for an absence of actual information and data, it must be considered how well this is able to satisfy the intended purpose
- **Reliable** – Information and data should reflect stable and consistent information and data collection processes across the organisation
- **Timely** – Information and data should be available within a reasonable time, quickly and frequently enough to support organisational needs
- **Relevant** – Information and data captured should be relevant to the purposes for which it is used. This entails periodic reviews of requirements to reflect changing needs
- **Complete** – Information and data should be captured, in accordance information with the definitions, or based on the needs of the organisation and data collection processes matched to these requirements
- **Usable** - Information and data should be able to be combined with other information and data to aid actions and decision making. It should also be easy to create with minimal bureaucracy balanced against purpose
- **Supplied** – Information and data should be available or supplied to the right staff in the right format at the right time
- **Used by trained people** – People (internal and partners are the first line in securing the information and data that N&H hold. People will be upskilled in managing information and data as part of delivering this Strategy.



