

28 November 2022**VALUING OUR INFORMATION PROGRAMME****Purpose**

1. To provide an update to the Executive Board (EB) on progress of the Valuing Our Information (VOI) programme and to ask EB members to encourage teams in the continued rolling adoption of the now defined information management principles.

Background

2. The VOI programme was commissioned by EB in 2020 following a Forestry Commission (FC) wide assessment of information management being “absent” on the JISC information maturity model¹.
3. EB agreed that Forestry England would take the lead on developing common KIM policy and guidance for use across FC. Forestry England had the most significant improvements required and had a KIM team in place that could lead on the development and sharing of policy and guidance.
4. It was agreed that implementation would be led within each arm of the Forestry Commission to take account of business systems and approaches.
5. The four-year programme formally started in 2021 with the EB agreed aim:

to improve Forestry Commission’s effectiveness, trust and compliance through increasing the level of knowledge and information management maturity from absent to defined/embedded

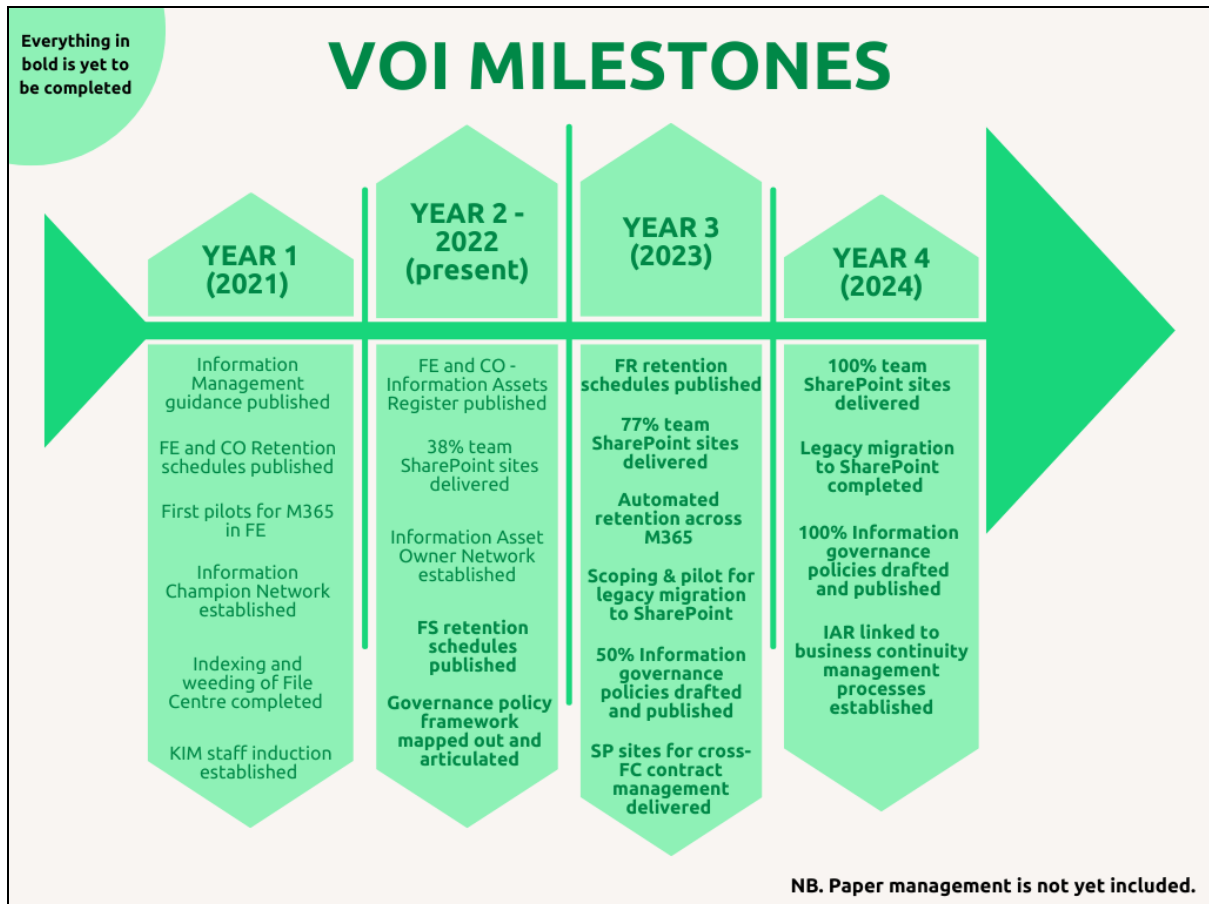
6. The EB recognised VOI was a large-scale cultural change programme. While the programme would introduce new technology and new policies, culture change was needed to ensure staff knew what was required of them to manage information effectively. It was recognised that changing the culture would require high levels of support in terms of communications, guidance and training across the organisation.

Progress to Date

7. The programme is approaching the end of its second year. There is strong programme governance in place with an engaged Steering Group which includes cross-FC representation. It meets quarterly to review progress, give a steer on direction and ensure programme risks are managed.
8. The programme is focused on ensuring the agreed aims are met which means reviews of delivery areas and priorities on a regular basis, adjusting where needed so overall programme delivery remains on track.

¹ The JISC information maturity model has 4 levels covering level 0 (absent), level 1 (aware), level 2 (defined) and level 3 (embedded). A description of each of these levels is provided in the Appendix.

9. The infographic below shows the programme milestones delivered against over the previous two years and the upcoming milestones for the next two years.



10. The programme has made significant progress in delivery and is where it expected to be at this stage of the programme; this is evidenced by the increase in information maturity within Forestry England and the Commissioner’s Office to Aware/Defined as based on the JISC information maturity model. The Forestry England KIM team will work with Forest Research and Forest Services over the next couple of months to establish their current level of information maturity.

Next Steps

11. The Forestry England KIM team will continue to develop policy, guidance and systems that will be available for adaptation and use across the FC. The Forestry England KIM team will continue to implement solutions within Forestry England and the Commissioner’s Office. Forest Research and Forest Services have dedicated resource to support implementation of information management principles and policies.

12. All parts of the FC are working towards the same aim and it is expected there will be a commonality in their high-level approach to information management by the end of year three. The commonality of approach will enable the transfer of knowledge, interchange and innovation between the different parts of the FC around implementation of information principles.

Resource implications

13. There is an ongoing requirement for staff time from teams in Forest Services, Forest Research and Forestry England to implement policy and guidance, for example where teams are engaged in establishing SharePoint sites or Information Asset Owners are supported to identify risks to ongoing access to information assets. The effort required from teams can be phased across the business in dialogue with the KIM leads within the respective arms of the Forestry Commission.
14. The upfront engagement with staff required through the programme will tail off towards the end of the fourth year as it is expected that increased automation of information governance will be introduced.
15. The programme costs are mainly staff with some consultancy and training. As agreed with EB the costs for two posts, based in the KIM team, to support VOI programme delivery are funded across the FC. The funding model is split 80-20 with Forestry England covering the larger portion and 20% being split equally across Commissioner's Office, Forest Services and Forest Research. As agreed with EB the model is based on representative rather than a fully scoped costing.
16. Non-staffing costs relate to consultancy and training and have been covered within business as usual budgets, for example consultancy to assist in developments to Forestry England's SharePoint delivery was covered within Forestry England's budget and training sourced by Forestry England of use to Forest Services and Forest Research have had costs re-couped.

Risk Assessment

17. The top risks for the VOI programme with the high-level mitigations are provided in the table below.

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of staff engagement with work packages being delivered through VOI due to competing priorities leading to information principles not be embedded and benefits of the programme not being realised.	Communications and engagement plan developed and delivered covering all levels of the staff across the FC.
The ability to deliver is put at risk due to capacity within the KIM team being stretched across increasingly competing demands including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering new systems and processes • supporting teams recently 	Delivery priorities reviewed on a half-yearly basis to ensure team are focused on work that will have the most impact. Working with IT to ensure best use of resources across both teams.

<p>onboarded to new systems to ensure smooth operations and improve usability for example SharePoint or paper management in Iron Mountain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning from delivery to improve in future delivery iterations • servicing business as usual requests, for example data protection and freedom of information 	
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Equality Impact Assessment

18. An Equality Impact Assessment will be produced for new training produced to help ensure it accessible and usable to all staff.

Communications

19. There is a range of widescale communications and focused engagement, including published information, guidance, training, news articles and blogs for colleagues on Roots. Information is targeted in Forestry England via the district comms leads and provided to the project leads for Forest Services and Forest Research. There have been several supportive blogs from colleagues on [paper management](#), [SharePoint site development](#) and [general information management](#). An [Information champions network](#) has been created to support colleagues across all parts of FC.

20. The support is well received as evidenced by this reflection on the support provided,

“The KIM team is a fantastic source of expertise and advice for us in Plant Health Forestry Team as we start to get information management processes in place. It’s been key, and a relief on many occasions, for me to know who I can ask for help, and the team is very approachable so it’s great we can just drop you a quick line or give you a call to chat something through. The guidance you’re producing onto Roots is helpful both for me in my planning and implementation work, but also something I can signpost colleagues to”.

Technical Development Officer, Plant Health Forestry Team

21. Executive Board members are asked to support the communications and engagement through including updates on the programme by referencing the programme on visits, staff /team briefings to teams or in blogs. The Forestry England KIM team will work with KIM leads in each arm of the FC to create messaging and updates that can be drawn upon by the Executive Board.

Recommendations

22. The Executive Board are invited to acknowledge the update and agree to encouraging teams to support the programme’s work.

KIM Lead
28 November 2022

Appendix

The JISC Record Management Maturity Model aims to give an accurate and reliable summary of the current level of maturity of the records management measures within an institution. It aims to help with:

- Identifying and providing evidence of good practice in records management
- Providing evidence of compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and its Code of Practice (Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the management of records issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000)
- Identifying gaps and areas of weaknesses which may require improvement
- Measuring the extent to which an institution views records management as an operational and strategic priority.

The following levels (0 – 3) describe different levels of record management processes within the maturity model.

0 - Absent. There is no record management instruction in place for the specified category. For example, as a business there is an 'absence' of arrangements in place to support records management.

1 - Aware. There is an awareness in the business for the specified category. For example, the business is 'aware' that records need to be kept for business, regulatory and legal purposes.

2 - Defined. There is policy and procedure underpinning record management processes. For example, FC have 'defined' record management as a key business activity with the formation of the KIM team with set deliverables for record management implementation across the business.

3 - Embedded. Record management is 'embedded' as part of team and staff ways of working across the business. This means that the ability for the business to store, access, interrogate and retrieve records is available to all staff across the business.