

Hawke's Bay Regional Council

Building Organisation-Wide Information Management Capability



Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) set out to transform how it managed information across the organisation. Without a dedicated information management officer, this was no small task. The Council needed a sustainable solution that would empower every staff member to manage information in line with compliance, operational, and cultural requirements.

By partnering with Information Leadership, HBRC pioneered a new model—treating every employee as an information leader within their domain. The result was a whole-organisation capability uplift that now underpins improved compliance, faster stakeholder responses, and a culture of shared responsibility for information.

Key Outcomes

- **Whole-organisation uplift:** Every department now has staff trained and confident in managing their own information.
- **Ownership and sustainability:** Solutions were co-designed by the people who use them, ensuring long-term adoption.
- **Faster responses:** Staff can find and share information more quickly, improving service delivery and responsiveness to LGOIMA and community enquiries.
- **Reduced risk:** Automated lifecycle management ensures compliance, reduces audit stress, and cuts storage costs.
- **Inclusive innovation:** Māori Partnerships now have a culturally respectful, compliant register that strengthens relationships with iwi and stakeholders.
- **Sector leadership:** HBRC demonstrated that ambitious transformation is achievable without reliance on external specialist teams.

Challenges

HBRC faced the challenge of modernising its information management environment without a dedicated IM officer, meaning the council needed to achieve compliance without relying on traditional specialist teams. The organisation's diverse operations also added complexity: scientific and engineering teams required tailored retention approaches to meet their unique data needs, while the Māori Partnerships team needed culturally respectful solutions that honoured tikanga Māori alongside compliance obligations.

This case study is an ideal reference for Information Managers, Chief Information Officers, and Transformation Leads seeking to reduce compliance risk, build internal capability, deliver cost-efficient scalable solutions, enable collaborative ways of working, and future-proofing for AI and automation.

At-A-Glance

Challenge: Modernising information management without a dedicated IM officer, across 46 departmental workspaces

Solution: Organisation-wide capability uplift through collaborative workshops, iWorkplace deployment, and change leadership grounded in operational expertise

Benefits: HBRC staff are now confident information managers in their own areas, with 46 redesigned workspaces embedding compliance, usability, and ownership. Information is easier to find and share, improving responsiveness to community needs and LGOIMA requests. Automated retention and lifecycle management reduce risk, cut storage costs, and simplify audits. Cultural responsiveness has been strengthened through custom registers for Māori Partnerships, balancing tikanga Māori with compliance. Most importantly, HBRC now has sustainable, internally driven capability – reducing reliance on external consultants and ensuring lasting impact.



**INFORMATION
LEADERSHIP**

As with any large-scale change, staff were initially concerned about losing control over familiar structures and ways of working, creating natural resistance to transformation. On top of this, HBRC had to deliver the project within tight resource constraints, ensuring progress was made without heavy reliance on external consultants.

Solution

Information Leadership worked with HBRC to embed capability across the organisation rather than centralising it. Key aspects of the project included:

- **Collaborative workshops:** 46 departments co-designed their own workspaces through structured sessions covering the Public Records Act, Privacy Act, and practical compliance.
- **Empowered change champions:** Staff were nominated by managers based on expertise and trust, not hierarchy. This ensured solutions were grounded in real operational knowledge.
- **iWorkplace deployment:** Smart Case Files, taxonomy-based organisation, and automated retention labels streamlined information environments and set foundations for future privacy and confidentiality labels.
- **Culturally responsive design:** Custom registers were developed with Māori Partnerships to align tikanga Māori with compliance obligations.
- **Knowledge transfer:** Information Leadership provided strategic direction and tools, while staff gained hands-on skills to self-manage their information environments long-term.

Results

Through their partnership with Information Leadership, HBRC has built a resilient and future-ready information management environment. Every staff member is now an information management specialist for their area – empowered, confident, and supported by smart technology.

This approach delivered measurable benefits: improved accessibility, streamlined compliance, faster responses, and stronger cultural alignment. Most importantly, HBRC now has sustainable, internally driven capability that will continue to evolve without dependence on external consultants.

HBRC's journey proves that when information management is embedded across the organisation, transformation is not only possible – it's enduring.

"Information Leadership helped us transform information management by empowering our people and building capability across the organisation. Through collaboration and shared ownership, our teams have developed the confidence and skills to manage information effectively. This people-centred approach has strengthened our culture and created a strong foundation for sustaining continuous improvement within our organisation."

— Hawke's Bay Regional Council HR Lead