Session D6: Never mind the technology, what about the exit plans?

The success of digital working means that much of the record now exits only as data that is held within a "line of business" operational database system. To preserve the record we must extract it from the line of business system and then retain it in an accessible form in some record preservation system. Preserving the digital record requires us to successfully hand down authentic records to multiple generations of record preservation systems as each system in its turn is retired.

The task of managing the transfer of records to successor record preservation systems is best achieved when the record is preservation system agnostic, that is independent of the technology employed, and when there are effective exit plans that support inter-generational transfer.

Record keepers therefore have a vital role in both the procurement of line of business systems and the management of record preservation systems. They should ensure that records can be successfully extracted as required from the line of business systems. And they should create and test effective exit plans from record preservation systems otherwise authentic records will be lost with the end of life (or contract term) of the preservation system.