LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL

9. GOVERNANCE

Policy 9.8

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Version 76

9. GOVERNANCE

9.12 RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

OBJECTIVES:

- To establish the framework for, and accountabilities of, Lithgow City Council's Records Management Program;
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Lithgow City Council's:

- Records Strategic Plan
- Access to Information Held Policy 9.17
- Various Recordkeeping Standard Working Procedures/SWPs
- Code of Conduct
- Model Social Media Policy
- Model Media Policy
- ECM User Manual
- ECM Procedures
- Legal Documents Manual
- Appendices A and B of the Records Management Policy

AUTHORITY OF THIS POLICY

This policy has been authorised by Council and is available to all staff. It has been developed in consultation with staff and will be revised as required and at a minimum at least once during the term of Council. Ownership of the policy rests with the delegated Corporate Records Manager/s, being the ~~Group Manager Corporate and Community~~CFIO (Chief Financial and Information Officer and the ~~Finance~~ IT Manager/Right to Information Officer, who are responsible for Council's Records Management Program, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements and recordkeeping standards.

All staff must comply with this policy, and associated Records Management Procedures, in their conduct of official business for Council. This policy applies to records in all formats, including electronic records.

RECORDS AS A RESOURCE

Lithgow City Council recognises that records are a vital asset to:

- facilitate information accessibility, and enhance business by supporting program delivery, management and administration

- deliver customer service in an efficient, fair and equitable manner

- provide evidence of actions and decisions and precedents for future decision making, and

- protect the rights and interests of Government, Council and its clients and citizens.

A small percentage of Council's records will become archives, part of the cultural resources of the State.

PROCEDURE:

1. GENERAL

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A records management program is a planned, co-ordinated set of policies, procedures, people, systems and activities that are required to manage records.
Lithgow City Council's Records Management Program seeks to ensure that:

- it has the records it needs to support and enhance ongoing business and customer service, meet accountability requirements and community expectations

- these records are managed efficiently and can be easily accessed and used for as long as they are required

- records are stored as cost-effectively as possible and, when no longer required, they are disposed of in a timely and efficient manner

- all staff are educated in their responsibilities under legislation and Government directives.

- this policy applies across a number of corporate systems (e.g. those used for storing property and finance information) and to information in applications such as email, social media and faxes. The changing nature of the corporate information systems requires the ability to deliver records management in an adaptive manner.

- as a significant part of Lithgow City Council's corporate memory, records enable informed decisions based on precedents and organisational experience. Records management principles support consistency, efficiency and productivity in program delivery, management and administration.

- the Council is committed to managing its records effectively and efficiently to promote informed decision-making, better performance of business activities, improved customer service, and protection and support in litigation and management of risk.

- Council complies with all requirements concerning records and records management practices including the NSW Government's objectives for recordkeeping (see Appendix A)

- records of longer term value are identified and protected for historical and other research.

A goal of particular note is that the organisation is committed, through its Records Management Program, to maintaining digital and other technology dependent records in authentic and accessible form for as long as they are required in accordance with s.14 of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

ELEMENTS OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Creation and Capture

Council has endorsed the use of a number of standard, open source file formats outlined in the ECM User Manual. These formats have been chosen to streamline the ongoing management of Council's records and should be the only formats used for the creation of records.
Staff should ensure that they create official records of all decisions and actions made in the course of their official business. For example, if business is transacted by telephone, file notes of the key points in the conversation should be documented. Official meetings should include the taking of minutes.
To assist in promoting the responsible creation of records, the capture of essential information and the management of records over time, Council has developed the following:

- paper and electronic templates

- definition of recordkeeping requirements and business rules

- procedures, standard creation rules and other guidelines

All records defined by the organisation as important to create should be captured into ECM, Council's electronic recordkeeping system, so they can be managed appropriately. The information required to be recorded about each record on capture is described in the *ECM User Manual.*

Records are registered in ECM and automatically assigned a unique number. They are indexed to the relevant subject/s and the document is assigned a meaningful précis.

Storage

Current hardcopy records scanned in ECM are filed in day boxes and stored in the Records Office while older hard copy ECM records are stored in the locked Archives Room in day boxes. Other current hard copy records are filed on Development Application, Building Application and Septic Tank Application Files.

State Archive, Confidential and Legal documents are stored in the Hartley Building strongroom.

Digital records should be stored and maintained in ECM until they can be disposed of. Records of short term value will be disposed of regularly by the Senior Records Officer. Records of long term or archival value should be retained online wherever possible and managed in accordance with the *Records Management Procedures.*

Removable media should be forwarded to the Senior Records Officer when rarely or no longer used for official purposes.

Maintenance and Monitoring

The location of each record needs to be recorded and updated at every movement of the record. This ensures that records, as assets, can be accounted for in the same way that the other assets of Council are. Staff members should notify a Records Officer when passing hard copy files on to another officer.

The Senior Records Officer is responsible for ensuring that records and environmental conditions are monitored regularly to protect records. This includes checking temperature and humidity levels in dedicated records storage areas for paper records and ensuring that digital records are refreshed or replicated when scheduled, when new storage devices and media are being installed or when degradation is detected.

Maintenance of digital records can also entail the migration of data. Migrations must be authorised by the Corporate Records Manager/s and must produce authentic, complete, accessible and useable records. For more information on procedures for migration, see the State Records NSW *General Retention and Disposal Authority – Source Records that have been Migrated* (GA33)

Council has implemented a number of security and counter disaster measures for safeguarding its information assets. Staff should abide by these measures at all times.

Disposal

Council has authorised Retention and Disposal Authorities (GA39 - *General Authority for Local Government and GA 36 – Imaged Records*) covering records relating to its core functions and activities. Council recommends that disposal actions are assigned to records in all formats on creation to ensure they are managed appropriately.

No Council records can be disposed of unless in accordance with GA39. Any sentencing of records must be supervised by the Senior Records Officer. Approval and signed authorisation for destruction of records must be sought from the General Manager before any disposal takes place.

Transfer

The transfer of records required as State archives in GA39 to State Records NSW when no longer in use for official purposes will be managed by the Senior Records Officer.

In the event of administrative change, e.g. the transfer of functions from Council to another organisation, the Senior Records Officer will advise staff on transfer procedures for records.

Access

Records must be available to all authorised staff that require access to them for business purposes. All access to Council's records by members of the public, including Government Information (Public Access) or GIPA requests, will be in accordance with Lithgow City Council's Policy 9.17 - Access to Information Held and State Records Access Directions.

Contractors and Outsourced Functions

All records created by contractors performing work on behalf of Council belong to Council and are State records under the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*. This includes the records of contract staff working on the premises as well as external service providers.

Contracts should clearly state that ownership of records resides with Council, and instructions regarding creation, management, and access to the records created. The Corporate Records Manager/s should be consulted during the formulation of the contract.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Lithgow City Council records are **state records**.

- The requirements and regulations of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW), which set out specific practices with which we must comply and will be audited against, bind Council.

- Other standards and legislation, such as the Evidence Act 1995, Government Information Public Access Act 2009 (commonly referred to as the GIPA Act), etc, will be complied with.

- A corporate standard will be set for records management that can be monitored and audited throughout Council that complies with AS ISO 15489 – Records Management.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

GENERAL MANAGER

- Ensures that Council complies with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW) and the standards and requirements issued under the Act. This includes the requirement for the public office to ensure that any records requiring technology to be read and understood remain readable and available for as long as they are required.
- Authorises disposal of records, in accordance with legislation.

CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGER/S (~~Chief Financial and Information Officer &~~ ~~Finance~~ ~~IT~~ **Manager**/Right to Information Officer)

- Has ownership of the Records Management Policy
- Develops strategic and operational plans for the Records Management Program
- In liaison with the IT Manager, ensures that the essential characteristics of digital records are identified prior to any preservation process taking place
- Provides support and infrastructure to ensure that records kept in electronic form are managed so that they are accessible, readable, inviolate, complete, comprehensive, and authentic for as long as required

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER

- Ensures the overall management of the Records Department

- Holds the role of Senior Responsible Officer for records management matters, including responding to requests for information on conformity with legislative requirements (i.e. responding to State Records records management surveys)
- Ensures that Council complies with the State Records Act 1998 (NSW) and other legislation relating to records management and recordkeeping
- Ensures that Records Management is adequately resourced
- Reports to the Executive on Records Management

COUNCILLORS

- All Councillors must comply with the Records Management for Councillors Standard Working Procedure in their conduct of official business for Council. Official business includes business relevant to the performance of the function and duties of the office of Councillor. The Standard Working Procedure applies to records in all formats, including electronic records.

SENIOR RECORDS OFFICER

- Provides leadership, supervision and co-ordinates Council's Records Unit and reports to the ~~Finance~~ IT Manager/Right to Information Officer
- Provides strategic focus for recordkeeping and monitors/audits compliance with legislative requirements that impact upon the management of the Records Unit, including Equal Opportunity and WHS, whilst keeping abreast of new developments and technologies in the records and archives field
- Responsible for the conduct of records management operations, supervising the efficient and effective day to day management of records and daily work tasks to ensure that performance standards are met
- Oversees the effective operation, administration and development of Council EDRMS whilst maintaining the capture, retention, storage, retrieval, disposal, protection and preservation of Council Records and archives in a timely, confidential and accurate manner, in accordance with the State Records Act NSW 1998, other legislative requirements and best practice
- Develops policies, procedures, plans and standards in relation to all aspects of records management
- Acts as the Appropriate Person to manage the process of ensuring Tenders are placed in the Tender box and that the process to open Tenders is conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act and its associated Regulation(s)
- Maintains the functional disposal schedule to ensure that is up to date and reflects Council business needs
- Ensures preservation of confidentiality at all times
- Ensures that systems are in place to provide adequate security for and the appropriate access to, current and archived records
- Ensures the preservation of digital records is addressed in policy, planning and implementation of the public office's records management program
- Ensures levels of customer service for the Records Unit are met and maintained whilst overseeing effective team based philosophy to promote an effective service environment
- Ensures provision for the education/training of all Council officers in relation to recordkeeping responsibilities and when necessary, co-ordinates and delivers records management training
- Efficiently responds to requests for information, assistance and files to promote support for the recordkeeping system and to demonstrate its efficiency
- In conjunction with IT staff, establishes and maintains a customised recordkeeping metadata schema and business rules regarding how metadata is to be managed
- Provides reports and undertakes audits requested by management
- Organises the disposal of records, in liaison with relevant authorising manager
- Formulates and maintains vital records lists and counter disaster plans
- Coordinates and when necessary, delivers the records management training program
- Maintains ECM administration security
- Assists other Records officers as workload and/or special projects dictate

- Assists the ~~Group Manager Corporate and Community~~ Chief Financial and Information Officer, in ensuring robust governance systems related to the processing of requests for information under GIPA legislation, providing advice and recommendations in relation to the release of information
- Coordinates and delivers the records management training program
- Ensures that all staff are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities
- Ensures preservation of confidentiality at all times
- Maintains GA39 specifically for Lithgow City Council
- Maintains Council's Legal Documents
- Minutes Index entry for both current and older Council meeting minutes
- Regularly check, capture or distribute emails from Council
- Efficiently responds to customer requests for information, assistance and files, to promote support for the recordkeeping system and to demonstrate its efficiency
- Creates new customers in Customer Index
- Undertakes allocated ECM audits which include: To be indexed, Pending items, Note headings, Personnel Classifications, Confidential Classifications, incorrect Index level links, spell check and End of day audit
- Link all documents to the functional Subject Index, including Council Meeting reports
- Prepare acknowledgement letters for complaints and submissions

RECORDS OFFICER

- Contributes to the development of Council's records management policies, procedures, plans and standards
- Makes recommendations for the improvement or modification of practices
- Supports and contributes to the efficient and effective provision of consistently high quality records information management services, in the capture, maintenance, storage and distribution of records in a timely, confidential and accurate manner.
- Undertakes the accurate opening, sorting, coding, scanning, registering, summarising, tasking, storing, distributing incoming correspondence and internal emails and facsimiles
- Ensures preservation of confidentiality at all times
- Ensures and assists in monitoring of compliance with legislative requirements for recordkeeping within Council and other legislation, policies and practices that impact upon the management of the Records Unit, including Equal Opportunity and WHS
- Ensures levels of service for the Records Unit are met and maintained
- Maintains Council's Legal Documents
- Regularly check, capture or distribute emails from Council
- Maintains Council's Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS), ECM.
- Undertakes allocated ECM audits which include: To be indexed, Pending items, Note headings, Personnel Classifications, Confidential Classifications, incorrect Index level links, spell check and End of day audit
- Link all documents to the functional Subject Index, including Council Meeting reports
- Minutes index entry for both current and older Council meeting minutes
- Creates new customers in Customer Index
- Prepare acknowledgement letters for complaints and submissions
- Efficiently responds to customer requests for information, assistance and files, to promote support for the recordkeeping system and to demonstrate its efficiency
- Assists other Records officers as workload and/or special projects dictate
- When required, undertakes position/duties of Senior Records Officer
- When required, assists in delivering the records management training
- When required, files documents in day boxes

MANAGERS

- Ensure that records are created and managed within their program in a way which complies with the Records Management Policy and Procedures.
- Provide feedback on the successful migration processes to help ensure that records remain authentic, complete, accessible and useable
- Ensure that staff are trained in how to create and manage records
- Determine legislative requirements for records relating to their specific activities. E.g. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Food Act 2003, etc.
- Ensure that contracts with service providers contain records management clauses in accordance with this Records Management Policy

IT STAFF

- Network management
- Management of Council's recordkeeping systems to ensure Council can deliver its programmed activities in an optimal manner
- Manages data integrity management including back ups and internal audit procedures
- Maintenance of Council's hardware ensuring it meets all of Council's recordkeeping needs
- Management, maintenance and control of all peripherals (printers, scanners, photocopiers)
- Management and optimisation of remote access to improve performance and timeliness of officers working external to main administration building

ALL STAFF

- Comply with Records Management Policy and Procedures
- Create full and accurate records of their business activities, including records of all decisions and actions made in the course of their official business
- Ensure that all business related records are saved into the organisation's business recordkeeping systems. (e.g. ECM, GIS, TI Property, T1 Financials)
- Prioritise and complete allocated recordkeeping activities within specified time frames

CONTRACTORS

- Manage records that they create on behalf of Council according to the terms of their contract

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed as required and at a minimum at least once during the term of Council.

APPENDIX A

Legislative and Government Requirements for Recordkeeping

- State Records Act 1998 (NSW) – including standards and retention and disposal authorities issued under the Act

- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

- Privacy and Protection of Personal Information Act 1998

- Evidence Act 1995

- Electronic Transactions Act 2000

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

- Local Government Act 1993

- Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002

- Public Finance and Audit Act, 1983

- Commonwealth Copyright Act 1968

- NSW Public Sector Code of Conduct

- NSW Treasurer's Directions

- Good Conduct and Administrative Practice: Guidelines for Public Authorities and Officials (NSW Ombudsman)

- Premier's Memoranda and Circulars, including M1998-16, C2003-17, M2004-14, M2007-08

Note: This list is not exhaustive. It is the responsibility of managers to examine legislation and government directions which govern their activities, and ensure that records arising from these activities conform with recordkeeping requirements.

APPENDIX B – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary has been compiled from the *State Records Glossary of Recordkeeping Terms.* Sources of terms include Australian and international standards on records management.

Access

Right, opportunity, means of finding, using or retrieving information. *AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.1*

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations. *AS 4390 Part 1 Clause 4.3*

Archives

Those records that are appraised as having continuing value. *AS 4390 Part 1 Clause 4.5*

Classification

Systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods and procedural rules represented in a classification system. *AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.5*

Counter Disaster Plan

A plan for measures to be taken for disaster prevention, disaster response and recovery and vital records protection.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records. *AS 4390 Part 1 Clause 4.9*

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information. *AS 4390 Part 1 Clause 4.19*

Recordkeeping Requirements

Requirements arising from regulatory sources, business needs and community expectations that identify the types of records that should be created and the management framework needed in order to have, and accountably manage, all the business information that is necessary for an organisation.

Recordkeeping Systems

Recordkeeping systems are business information systems capable of capturing, maintaining and providing access to records over time.

Records

Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. *AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.15*
Any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means. State Records Act 1998 (NSW)

Records Management

Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. *AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.16*

Records Management Program

A records management program encompasses the management framework, the people and the systems required within an organisation to manage full and accurate records over time. This includes the identification and protection of records with longer-term value that may be required as State archives.

Retention and Disposal Authority

Documents authorised by the Board of State Records NSW that set out appropriate retention periods for classes of records. There are two main types:

- **Functional retention and disposal authorities** authorise the retention and disposal of records unique to a specific organisation.

- **General retention and disposal authorities** authorise the retention and disposal of records common to more than one organisation. Such records may include general administrative records, common records that relate to unique functions and records relating to the unique functions of like organisations such as local councils, universities and public health services.

State Archive

A State record that State Records Authority NSW has control of under the State Records Act, 1998 (NSW).

Vital Records

Those records that are essential for the ongoing business of an agency, and without which the agency could not continue to function effectively. The identification and protection of such records is a primary object of records management and disaster planning. Ellis (ed), Keeping Archives, p. 480.

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