

5.6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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DEPARTMENT Finance and Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Records Management Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform of the need to adopt a Records Management Policy. An action from the 2022 internal audit was to develop a Records Management Policy and ensure it is aligned to the relevant legislation, being;

1. *Public Records Act 2002*
2. *Local Government Act 2009*
3. *Local Government Regulation 2012*

BACKGROUND

Following de amalgamation, Douglas Shire Council has not had a formal Record Keeping Policy. The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the governance of recordkeeping within Council ensuring it is managed in accordance with relevant legislation, policies, standards and guidelines.

In 2022, the internal audit of the Records Management system found that Council requires a Records Management Policy, which should be adopted by Council. The policy has been drafted after conducting a review of other Councils and the relevant legislation (refer 'related legislation & documents listed in the attached policy page 4).

PROPOSAL

That Council adopts the Records Management Policy.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications of adopting the Records Management Policy.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

If this policy is not adopted by Council, there is a risk that Council operations will not comply with the relevant legislation.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Nil

Environmental: Nil

Social: Nil

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 5 - Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

Strong governance and financial management are the foundations of the way in which Council will conduct its business and implement the initiatives of the Corporate Plan.

Goal 1 - *We will conduct Council business in an open and transparent manner with strong oversight and open reporting.*

Operational Plan 2022-2023 Actions:

Legislative requirement.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Regulator Council has a number of statutory obligations detailed in numerous regulations and legislative Acts. Council also makes local laws to ensure that the Shire is well governed. In fulfilling its role as regulator, Council will utilise an outcomes based approach that balances the needs of the community with social and natural justice.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Workshop with Councillors held 14 February 2022.
Senior Records Management Officer, Governance Manager, Chief Executive Officer.

External: Pacifica Accountants

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Records Management Policy [5.6.1 - 5 pages]

(Policy Number) Records Management Policy

Purpose

To provide a framework for the governance of recordkeeping within Council ensuring it is managed in accordance with relevant legislation, policies, standards and guidelines. This relates in particular to the *Public Records Act 2002*, the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Council employees, contractors and Councillors.
- All aspects of Council's business, all records created during business transactions (both internal and external), metadata, and to all business applications used to create records including physical (hard copy) records, digitised and scanned records, electronic records including emails, records held in databases or on websites and other technology dependent records.

Objective

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- A strong foundation is provided for systematically and effectively managing complete and reliable records and information.
- Council records are actively managed and preserved to support ongoing business activities and customer services, meeting accountability requirements and community expectations.
- Increased discoverability and accessibility of records and information.
- Compliance with legislative, administrative and business requirements.
- Sound Records Management practices and procedures are fully integrated into all aspects of Council business.
- All Council employees, contractors and Councillors are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities.

Policy Statement

Records are a corporate asset. They form the corporate memory and support accountability by providing evidence. They assist Council to make use of organisational knowledge and experience, contribute to informed decision-making and better performance of business activities and improved customer service, program delivery and risk management.

The systematic creation and capture of administrative records is therefore fundamental to the efficient and effective functioning of Council's processes and to protecting its corporate memory. Business activities of Council will be documented, recorded and managed to protect the integrity, enhance proficiency, provide transparency and preserve the history of Council. InfoXpert is Council's principal recordkeeping system for the capture of all corporate information in all formats. This will enhance an integrated process for records creation, storage and archiving systems across Council.

Policy Content

Policy Requirement 1: Council must ensure records management is supported at all levels of business.

Council must ensure records management is everyone's responsibility. This means it must be supported across all areas and all levels of the business by:

- Assigning formal records management responsibilities to key roles within the business to monitor and support the active implementation of this policy.
- Providing appropriate advice and guidance to ensure the business is aware of the value of records and information and how this relates to their obligations and responsibilities as an employee.
- Fostering a positive, innovative and collaborative recordkeeping culture.

Policy Requirement 2: Council must systematically manage records using governance practices that are integrated and consistent.

Consistent and aligned governance practices provide a strong foundation for systematically managed records and information across all functions of Council. Records governance must work within the Council's existing structure and governance and strengthen Council's strategic goals and functions.

Council must systematically manage records and information by:

- Ensuring records and information governance is aligned across Council and incorporated in business strategies and objectives.
- Developing and implementing appropriate and fit-for-purpose documentation that details how active records management will strengthen Council's business imperatives and strategic goals.
- Complying with relevant legislation that governs recordkeeping requirements.
- Measuring how well records governance is supporting Council's imperatives and strategic goals.

Policy Requirement 3: Council must create complete and reliable records.

Complete and reliable records provide evidence of activities of Council and allow the business to operate effectively.

Council must ensure complete and reliable records are created and retained as appropriate by:

- Identifying all the records that allow the business to operate – these provide evidence of decisions, support accountability and transparency, mitigate risk, help Council meet legislative requirements and reflect the business of Council.
- Specifying how these records must be created, when they must be created, the format they must be created in, who must create them and implementing security and preservation requirements associated with those records.
- Integrating record creation into existing business processes.
- Ensuring recordkeeping is considered when decisions are made about business systems (particularly decision around migration and end of life).

Policy Requirement 4: Council must actively manage permanent, high-value and high-risk records and information as a priority.

‘Permanent’ records are those with a permanent retention period. ‘High value’ records are those that are important to the business, its operations, or stakeholders. ‘High-risk’ records are those that pose a significant risk to Council if they were misused, lost, damaged or deleted prematurely. These records should have the highest priority for Council when developing and implementing its governance practices.

Council must actively manage permanent, high-value and high-risk records by:

- Defining the criteria and processes for identifying permanent, high-value and high-risk records, including transfer of permanent value records to Queensland State Archives.
- Formally documenting details of permanent, high-value and high-risk records.
- Actively maintaining visibility of these records while they are being used, including monitoring processes for permanent, high-value and high-risk records held in business systems and applications.

Policy Requirement 5: Council must make records discoverable and accessible for use and re-use.

Discoverable records are those that are in business systems and applications approved for use by Council.

Accessible records are those that can be located and continuously used. Council must ensure complete and reliable records are discoverable, accessible and are able to be used and re-used for their entire life by:

- Keeping records in business systems and applications approved for use by Council.
- Being able to discover and appropriately access records, with confidence in sufficiency of search.
- Actively monitoring the health of records.

Policy Requirement 6: Council must dispose of records in a planned and authorised way.

Council must plan for how and why they will dispose of records, using a risk-based approach. Records must be disposed of in a planned and authorised way by:

- Using the disposal authorities issued by the State Archivist, which provide proper coverage of the specific records you create and keep.
- Developing and implementing a disposal plan, which details disposal decisions and actions for Council. The plan must, at a minimum, cover:
 - disposal endorsement, including how internal endorsement is given
 - disposal methods, including how records will be disposed of (physical and digital)
 - disposal frequency, including specifying how often certain types of records will be disposed of
- Formally documenting the disposal of records.

Risk Management

The policy supports Council’s strong commitment to transparency, accountability and adherence to the governance framework. It mitigates records governance risks by ensuring that records are managed, discoverable and preserved, that unauthorised disclosure/access is managed by utilising confidential classes on relevant documents and that all Council staff are aware of their record responsibilities.

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Business Activities	Is a broad term covering all functions, processes, activities and transactions of Council and its workers.
Council	Means Douglas Shire Council
Metadata	Is identifying information collected with a record at the point of capture to enable cataloguing and searching. It also accrues throughout the life of a record to provide information on how a record has been used or managed and is essential for preserving the authenticity of records. It can be used to describe physical items as well as digital items in detail to ensure greater information accessibility and improved records management.
Record	Means 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.
Recordkeeping	Refers to making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.

Related Legislation & Documents

REFERENCE	DOCUMENT TITLE
Doc ID 773668	Computer Usage Administration Instruction (formerly CRC)
Doc ID 773820	Recordkeeping Admin Instruction (formerly CRC)
QLD Gov Website	<i>Public Records Act 2002</i> (under review)
QLD Gov Website	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i>
QLD Gov Website	<i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i>
QLD Gov Website	<i>Right to Information Act 2009 (QLD)</i> <i>Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD)</i>
QLD Gov Website	General Retention and Disposal Schedule (GRDS)
QLD Gov Website	Local Government Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule (QDAN480v.4)
QLD Gov Website	Records Governance Policy **
QLD Gov Website	Records Governance Policy Implementation Guidelines
QLD Gov Website	Information Management Policy Framework (IMPF)
<p>** This policy is published within the QGEA which is administered by the Queensland Government Customer and Digital Group. This policy was developed by the Queensland State Archives and is approved by the Queensland State Archivist and the Queensland Government Chief Information Officer.</p>	

Policy Review

This policy is to be reviewed whenever legislation changes, or every 3 years if no changes have been required to be enacted, at the direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Policy Details

Policy Name	Records Management Policy
Policy Number	
Policy Version	1
Document Number	
Endorsed by	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Type	Legislative
Approval Authority	Council
Date Adopted	Date adopted at Council
Time Period	3 Years
Review Date	Approximately 3 months prior to next adoption
Policy Department	Finance & Corporate Services, and Governance
Link to Corporate Plan	
Revoked/Superseded	N/A

This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.