

IM 2 – Records management

1 Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to define the principles of the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes' records management function and to document an orderly and efficient approach to the proper management of records.

Records are recognised as an important information resource in the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, and it is accepted that sound record management practices will contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Organisation.

2 Scope

The policy applies to all external and internal records, which are handled, received or generated by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, regardless of their physical format or media type.

3 Definitions

3.1 Disposal

The permanent removal of a record, according to the Retention and Disposal Schedule (R&D) once its lifecycle has expired.

Disposal is by way of depositing records in the State Archives, managing the records as designated State Archives at the Council, or by destruction in accordance with General Disposal Schedule for Local Government Records.

This can take the form of physical destruction (i.e. secure shredding) of hard copy records, or deletion/removal from Shire's electronic records management system (in the case of electronic records).

3.2 Electronic Records

An electronic record is any information that is input onto a computer system and processed, modified, stored and accessed via that system. Electronic records include word processing files, electronic spreadsheets, databases, electronic mail, internet and intranet systems and imaged documents. The information within electronic records must be appraised in the same way as paper-based records.

3.3 Ephemeral Records

Ephemeral records are duplicated records and/or those that have only short-term value to the Shire, with little or no on-going administrative, fiscal, legal, evidential or historical value. They may include insignificant drafts and rough notes, records of routine enquiries.

3.4 Non-Records

Non-records are documents that are generally available in the public domain and do not form part of a business process in respect to the Shire's activities. They are generally used for reference and information purposes, such as reports or plans from another organisation, a published directory, or a training manual of a third party.

3.5 Personal Records

A record which does not have, nor will ever have, any business use or value.

3.6 Record

A record as defined in the *State Records Act 2000* means any record of information however recorded and includes:

- Anything on which there is writing or Braille;
- A map, plan, diagram or graph;
- A drawing, pictorial or graphic work or photograph;
- Anything on which there are figures, marks, perforations, or symbols, having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them;
- Anything from which images, sounds or writings can be reproduced with or without the aid of anything else; and
- Anything on which information has been stored or recorded, either mechanically, magnetically, or electronically.

3.7 Significant Records

Significant records are those which:

- Contain information which is of administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential or historical value and are not recorded elsewhere on the public record.
- Document formal communication and/or a transaction between staff, or between a staff member and another party; or
- Document the rationale behind policy, decisions and directives.

Important Note: Distinguishing between significant and ephemeral records is a matter of judgment and the above definitions can only act as a guide. Reference to “records” in this guideline document should be read as relating to significant public records unless otherwise stated.

3.8 Vital Records

Vital records are those that are essential for the ongoing business of the Shire and without which the Shire could not continue to function effectively. The identification and protection of such records is a primary object of records management and disaster planning.

Examples of vital records include core computer system records, Council and Committee Minutes and Agendas, Financial and Budget records, Title Deeds, Policy and Procedure Manuals, Registers, Contracts/Tenders, Historical documents, Delegation of Authority, Insurance Policies, Town Planning Scheme deeds/information and any document detailing approvals of some kind.

3.9 Worker

A part-time or full-time employee, casual employee, contractor, subcontractor, self-employed person, outworker, apprentice or trainee, work experience student, employee of a labour hire company placed with a 'host employer' and volunteers.

4 Policy

4.1 Statement

Complete and accurate records of all business decisions and transactions are to be recorded and registered in the Shire's records management system both in respect to their content and context. They are to be managed in a cost-effective manner in accordance with records management and record keeping legislative requirements.

- All records are to be managed according to whether they are significant or ephemeral records, vital or non-vital records, and in accordance with their security classification.
- All communications in the form of records, whether paper or electronic, and whether internal or external, are to be captured within the appropriate aspect of the record keeping system.
- Registers are to be maintained of all records series and special categories, including but not limited to, registers of policies, databases, FOI applications, assets, tenders, photographs, forms, vital records, files and contracts.
- All contractual arrangements are to ensure the Shire's ownership of significant records.
- Any records/files in the possession of individual staff are to be registered to them and, dependent upon security classification, kept accessible.
- Only approved record formats are to be used in effecting the Shire's business.
- All records within record keeping series maintained by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes are to be disposed of in accordance with the State Records Office's General Disposal Schedule for Local Government Records.
- Records are not to be removed from the Shire's sites unless in accordance with the approved retention and disposal schedule, or in the custody of an officer performing approved business.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 Councillors

All Councillors are to create, collect and retain records relating to their role as a Councillor for the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes in a manner commensurate with legislation and the Shire's policies and procedures for record keeping.

Refer to Policy IM 1 – Record Keeping Guidelines for Elected Members for detailed procedures.

4.2.2 Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO is to ensure there is a system for the maintenance and management of records that is compliant with records management legislation and State guidelines and procedures. This includes the provisions of Section 5.41(h) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

4.2.3 Directors and Managers

Directors and Managers are to ensure their staff are familiar with and adhere to the Records Management Policy and any associated procedures endorsed by the CEO.

4.2.4 Staff

All workers are to ensure all records created or received in their official capacity are appropriately captured and retained within the shire's record management system. This includes identifying and

appropriately capturing vital/significant records and appropriate handling of ephemeral or non-records.

4.2.5 Records Staff

Records staff are responsible for providing a records management service which complies with this Policy, associated procedures and any State Records Office requirements.

4.3 Custodianship

The Shire's records are a government-owned asset. The records created during the course of business belong to the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes by virtue of their possession, and not to the individuals who created such records during their time as a public officer or Councillor at the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes. Workers or councillors who acquire or create any records in the course of business shall not retain proprietary interest. Ownership of these records is vested in the Shire.

4.4 Creation of Records

All Councillors and workers will create full and accurate records, in the appropriate format, of the Shire's business decisions and transactions to meet all legislative, business, administrative, financial, evidential and historical requirements.

4.5 Capture and Control

All records created and received in the course of Shire business are to be captured at the point of creation, regardless of format, with required metadata, into the Shire's records management system that are managed in accordance with sound record keeping principles.

4.6 Security and Protection of Records

All records are to be categorised as to their level of sensitivity and adequately secured and protected from violation, unauthorised access or destruction, and kept in accordance with necessary retrieval, preservation and storage requirements.

4.7 Access to Records

Access to the Shire's records will be in accordance with designated access and security classifications as determined by the CEO and as administered by the Records Officer.

Access to the Shire's records by Councillors will be through the CEO in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*, sections 5.41 and 5.92.

Inspection of the Shire's records by contractors, third parties and the general public will be in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* section 5.94 and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

4.8 Appraisal, Retention and Disposal of Records

All records kept by the Shire will be disposed of in accordance with the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, produced by the State Records Commission.

4.9 Statutory Obligations

The relevant aspects of the following should be considered in managing Shire records:

- *State Records Act 2000*
- *Evidence Act 1906*
- *Limitation Act 2005*

- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Financial Management Act 2006*
- *Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 - Section 85*
- *Electronic Transactions Act 2011*
- *Information Privacy Principle of the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*

5 Applicable Legislation and Documents

Statutory Power <i>(Acts, Regulations, Local Laws, TPS)</i>	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> s.2.7(2)(b) – The council is to determine the local government’s policies s.5.41(h) <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> – Functions of the CEO <i>State Records Act 2020</i> <i>Evidence Act 1906</i> <i>Limitation Act 1935</i> <i>Freedom of Information 1992</i> <i>Criminal Code 1913 (Section 85)</i> <i>Electronic Transactions Act 2000</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988</i>
Shire Policies	IM 1 – Record Keeping Guidelines for Elected Members
Related Documents	Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes Record Keeping Plan 2020 State Records Commission Standards and Principles
Related Procedure	N/A

6 Administration

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