Warrumbungle Shire Council
Records Management Strategy

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 This document sets out an overarching framework for integrating current records management initiatives, as well as recommending new ones. It defines a strategy for improving the quality, availability and effective use of records at Warrumbungle Shire Council ('Council') and provides a strategic framework for all records management activities. This will enable overall coordination of all records management activities and ensure alignment with Council's business strategies.

1.2 The records management strategy should be read in conjunction with Council's Records Management Policy for Councillors, Records Management Procedure for Councillors, Records Management Policy, and Records Management Procedure.

2. Objectives

2.1 The objectives of Council's records management strategy are to ensure:

- A systematic and planned approach to records management covering records from creation to disposal,
- Efficiency and best value through improvements in the quality and flow of information, and greater coordination of records and storage systems,
- Compliance with statutory requirements,
- Awareness of the importance of records management and the need for responsibility and accountability at all levels, and
- Appropriate archiving of Council's records.

3. Scope

3.1 This strategy relates to all operational records held in any format by Council as required by section 12.1 of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW) ('the Act'):

> *"12   RECORDS MANAGEMENT OBLIGATIONS*
> *"(1) Each public office must make and keep full and accurate records of the activities of the office."*

3.2 These include records held in all formats, including but not limited to:

- Paper records, reports, minutes, diaries and registers;
- Electronic records;
- Audio and video tapes.

4. Associated Legislation and Documents

Associated Legislation	• *State Records Act 1998* (NSW) • *Government Information and Public Access Act 2009* (NSW)
Associated Policies	• Records Management for Councillors • Records Management Policy (Management)
Associated Documents	• Records Management for Councillors Procedure • Records Management Procedure (management) • State Records *'General Retention and Disposal Authority: Local Government Records' (GA39)*

5. Key Elements

5.1 The records management strategy comprises the following key elements:

5.1.1 Responsibility and Accountability
To provide a clear system of accountability and responsibility for record keeping and use.

It is important that all individuals undertaking Council business appreciate the need for responsibility and accountability in the creation, amendment, management, storage of and access to all Council records. A major target is therefore to have a clear chain of managerial responsibility and accountability for all records created by Council. This is the prerequisite for an effectively coordinated records management strategy.

5.1.2 Record Quality
To create and keep records that are adequate, consistent, and necessary for statutory, legal and business requirements.

Council records should be accurate and complete, in order to facilitate audit, fulfil Council's obligations, and protect its legal and other rights. Records should show proof of their validity and authenticity so that any evidence derived from them is clearly credible and authoritative.

5.1.3 Management
To achieve systematic, orderly and consistent creation, retention, appraisal and disposal procedures for records throughout their life cycle.

Record-keeping systems should be easy to understand, clear, and efficient in terms of minimising staff time and optimising the use of space for storage.

5.1.4 Security
To provide systems which maintain appropriate confidentiality, security and integrity for records in their storage and use.

Records must be kept securely to protect the confidentiality and authenticity of their contents, and to provide further evidence of their validity in the event of a legal challenge.

5.1.5 Access
To provide clear and efficient access for employees and others who have a legitimate right of access to Council records, and ensure compliance with government information legislation.

Access is a key part of any records management strategy. Fast, efficient access to records unlocks the information and knowledge they contain.

5.1.6 Audit
To audit and measure the implementation of the records management strategy against agreed standards

The performance of the records management programme will be audited.

5.1.7 Training
To provide training and guidance on legal and ethical responsibilities and operational good practice for all staff involved in records management
Effective records management involves Councillors and staff at all levels. Training and guidance enable all stakeholders to understand and implement policies, and facilitates the efficient implementation of good record keeping practices.

6. Implementation
6.1 The action points, in the attached table, have been developed from Council's *Records Management for Councillors Policy* and *Records Management Policy* which require the following fundamentals to be present:

- Existence of an overall policy statement on how records (including electronic records) are to be managed;
- Endorsement of policy by senior management;
- Circulation of policy to councillors and staff at all levels;
- Organisational commitment to create, keep and manage records which document activities;
- Definition of roles and responsibilities;
- Definition of responsibility of personnel to document actions and decisions in the records and to dispose of obsolete records;
- Provision of framework for supporting appropriate standards, procedures and guidelines;
- Provision of monitoring mechanisms to ascertain compliance with appropriate standards, procedures and guidelines; and
- Review of policy at regular intervals (at least once every four years).

7. Version Control

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Document	Version	Resolution	Date
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