



SHIRE COUNCIL
Blayney

Records Management Policy

Policy	11B
Officer Responsible	Director Corporate Services
Last Review Date	21/05/2024

Strategic Policy

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to define a framework for Council to:

- manage records efficiently and effectively;
- meet accountability requirements and community expectations; and
- comply with legislative and policy requirements relating to record keeping practices.

1. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the management of Blayney Shire Council's (BSC) corporate records in accordance with relevant legislation, standards and codes approved by State Records.

State legislation requires that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of BSC are created, managed, retained and or disposed of appropriately. This policy sets out the principles and responsibilities to promote information accessibility and accountability while ensuring the protection of the rights and interests of council, staff, customers and the community.

BSC has implemented the IT Vision Software (Synergysoft) as the official Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

2. DEFINITIONS

Access: Right, opportunity, means of finding, using or retrieving information.

Archives: Those records which are no longer required for current use, but have been selected for permanent retention because of their evidential or informational value.

Capture: A deliberate action which results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system.

Disposal Schedule: A systematic listing of records created by an organisation in accordance with an approved retention/disposal authority that plans the life of these records from the time of their creation to their disposal.

Electronic/Digital Records: Records communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment.

Migrating/Migration: The process of moving records from one system to another, while maintaining the records' authenticity, integrity, reliability and useability.

Record: Something created and kept as evidence of agency or individual functions, activities and transactions.

State Records: Any records made or received, by any person in the course of the exercise of official functions in a public office, or for any purpose of a public office, or for the use of a public office.

Vital Records: Records and information that are essential for the ongoing business of the Council and without which the council could not continue to function effectively including those records needed to operate and re-establish council functions in the event of a disaster.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. General Manager

Under the State Records Act, the General Manager is responsible for ensuring that BSC complies with the regulations and requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.

3.2. Director Corporate Services

The Director Corporate Services functions as BSC's Corporate Records Manager (CRM) for the purposes of the Records and Information Management Program. The CRM is accountable for the management of the program as well as ensuring BSC's compliance with the *State Records Act 1998* standards.

3.3. Records Supervisor

The Records Supervisor reports directly to the Director Corporate Services and is responsible for the implementation and efficient operation of BSC's Records and Information Management Program and the provision of services to users.

3.4. Directors and Managers

Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff respond to correspondence and action tasks in a timely manner and for ensuring that members of staff who have access to confidential information are instructed regarding their rights and obligations when dealing with such matters.

3.5. Information Technology (IT) Staff

IT Staff are responsible for ensuring that Council programs and systems operate in support of Council records and information management through the management of data integrity including back-ups, internal audits procedures, maintenance of Council's hardware and the prevention of data loss during any decommission of systems.

3.6. Staff

All staff are accountable for compliance with this policy and related policies, procedures, programs, management plans standards and guidelines. Staff members are responsible for capturing and creating business records in accordance with Council procedures.

These records will include:

- decisions
- oral decisions and commitments, including telephone discussions
- meetings
- interviews / discussions with customers (internal and external)
- other events
- business activities in which they take part.

All staff will:

- Capture information by ensuring accurate registration into the EDMS (SynergySoft), and/or physical files in accordance with protocols;
- Handle records and information sensibly and with care and respect so as to avoid damage to the records and prolong their life (Hardcopy records in particular);
- Not alienate, relinquish control over, damage, alter or destroy records of Council;
- Access only the official records that they are authorised to access
- Identify vital records in consultation with the Records Supervisor.

3.7. Contractors and Outsourced Functions

Contractors and external service providers must manage records that they create on behalf of BSC according to the terms of their contract. Access to records held by the contractor such as performance of services, information collected from members of the public or information provided to the contractor by BSC may be subject to access applications under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

4. MANAGING RECORDS AND INFORMATION

4.1. Records and Information Management Program

The *State Records Act 1998* s.12(2) requires that BSC maintains a Records Management Program. This program is an organisation wide program that covers the full range of BSC records and information.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Have full and complete information and records of all Council operations to support business activities
- Ensure that information and records are useable and accessible for as long as they are required
- Regularly monitor information management activities; and
- Have information management systems and practices that comply with external requirements and standards.

4.2. Migration

When purchasing or implementing new systems, an assessment must be undertaken to identify the types of records that will be created or stored within that system and consultation must take place with the Records Supervisor to determine the appropriate management of those records.

In the event that software or system is de-commissioned, a robust migration plan must be put in place to protect Council records from loss

including transfer, appropriate metadata and format readability.

4.3. Creation and Capture of Records

Records form an important component of business reliability and accountability. BSC has implemented the ITVision Software (Synergysoft) as the official Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). All records created and/or received by Council must be saved into SynergySoft, except where a business area still maintains physical records.

This includes the creation and/or receipt of records within or from other Council information sources for example Council's website, procurement portal and social media.

Business areas that have not yet transitioned to digital recordkeeping have the same obligations to capture records in a physical format.

4.4. Storage and Security of Records

All records will be stored appropriately to allow for their retrieval and use for the life of their retention. This includes preservation of both digital and physical record formats.

Access to records will be restricted to protect their integrity, privacy and confidentiality.

Employees must not alienate, relinquish control over, damage or destroy BSC's records.

4.5. Archiving, Disposal and Destruction of Records

Local government records are governed by specific disposal authorities which have been approved under the *State Records Act 1998*.

Blayney Shire Council records will be protected, maintained and accessible for duration of their required retention. Archiving and Disposal of records will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant retention and disposal authorities issued under the *State Records Act 1998*.

5. ACCESS TO COUNCIL RECORDS AND INFORMATION

Access to Council Records will be in accordance with relevant legislation and Council Policy. The public will not be permitted access to the Records Management Section, storerooms or staff work areas.

6. RELATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

- 01B Code of Conduct
- 02C Complaints Management Policy
- 02G Access to Information Policy
- 08G Information Security Policy
- 11C Privacy Management Plan

7. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

- Government Access (Public Access) Act 2009
- Local Government Act 1993
- Museums of History NSW Act 2022
- Ombudsman Act 1976
- Privacy and Protection of Personal Information Act 1998
- State Records Act 1998
- Standards issued under the State Records Act 1998
 - Standard: No. 12 Standard on records management
 - Standard: No. 11 Standard on the physical storage of state records

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