Records & Information Management Policy

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Information & Records Management policy establishes the governance framework for the creation, capture, control, use, maintenance, and disposal of records within Bayside Council.

An information and recordkeeping program is fundamental to the Council's commitment to transparency and accountability. It enables Council to account for decisions and actions by providing essential evidence in the form of records and ensures trust and collaboration across all Council's business processes.

Council is concerned with all aspects of its recordkeeping independent of the technology being used or the medium the record is in. This policy seeks to ensure that Council's information and records, wherever possible, are managed digitally.

1.2 Policy statement

The policy outlines Council's records management responsibilities and informs Council's Information & Records Management Strategy.

Bayside Council is committed to sound information and records management practice which meets legislative requirements, reflects the business need, provides evidence of business transactions and protects Council and community interests.

Information and records are Council's organisational memory and provide the community with evidence based decision making - building trust.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:
- Ensure Council information and records remain accessible
- Support our ongoing business activity and customer services
- Meet legislative requirements and community expectations to manage records efficiently and effectively
- Store records cost effectively and when no longer required disposed of them in accordance with approved disposal authorities
- Ensure that records of longer term value are identified and protected for historical and other research
- Maintain digital and other technology dependent records in an accessible format for as long as they are required
- Comply with State and Commonwealth legislation and International Standards.

1.4 Scope of policy

This policy applies to:
- Councillors and staff at Bayside Council and the information and records they deal with
- Anyone performing work on Council's behalf including casuals, volunteers, contractors and consultants

- Any information or corporate record in any format, created, received or maintained by Council.

2 Principles

2.1 Digital Records Management

Council has a legal obligation to manage its records and must be able to account for its actions and expenditure of resources appropriated by the Council on behalf of the community. Information is a key Council asset and needs to be managed well to realise its value.

Digital management of records enables Council to make the best use of new technologies and innovative ways of doing business.

It enables Council to implement information reforms more efficiently and effectively.

2.2 Creation and capture

Records are created every time someone in Council writes an email, drafts a brief, writes a report or records minutes, adds data to a spread sheet or takes a photo.

This information is created as part of a specific business process, and needs to be managed so that it can be searched, shared, reused and repurposed, and increasing its value to Council. Records need to contain specific information to make them complete, accurate and reliable.

The information needs to reflect:
- What happened, the order of events
- What was decided or recommended
- What advice or instruction was given
- When it happened and who was involved.

2.3 Access to Council Records

Bayside Council requires open access to information and records unless the record itself requires protection. Protecting our information and records are governed by:
- Council's Access to Information Policy
- Access to Information Guidelines for Local Government
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPPA) 2009.

Many Council records are public documents and must be managed to provide easy access by our community.

2.4 Records Security

Records should be stored within approved recordkeeping systems to prevent unauthorised destruction, alteration or removal. Council's approved recordkeeping systems have a full audit log, have security and are managed and monitored.

- Council records must be stored only in Council's official recordkeeping systems – for example EDRMS, Finance System and Customer Relationship Management System
- All staff must ensure they lock their PC prior to leaving their desk to ensure information and records are secure.

2.5   Disposal and Destruction of Records

General staff cannot destroy or dispose of Council records. Only Records staff may destroy or dispose of Council records following strict procedures and with the final approval of the Coordinator Records Management.

Records can only be destroyed in accordance with:
- The General Disposal Authorities
- Council specific Disposal Authorities
- Transferred to State Archives for permanent retention.

Council records must be protected, maintained and accessible for their total retention period and must be disposed of in accordance with the State Records Act 1998 and Council's disposal procedures.

Information and records, which staff deem as ephemeral, may be destroyed using a procedure called 'Normal administrative practice (NAP)'. This practice usually occurs because the records are duplicated, unimportant or for short-term use only. General staff do not have permission to delete information and records under NAP and all items deleted under NAP are undertaken by approved officers only.

2.6   Value of Records as a corporate asset

The records of Bayside Council are an essential resource for information as they:
- Are a vital asset which Council can use to make future decisions
- Are the major component of the Council's corporate memory and provide evidence of business transactions and decisions
- Exist for a variety of administrative, functional, historical and legal reasons
- Support policy formulation and consistent and equitable decision making.

3   Policy implementation

3.1   Policy responsibilities

General Manager
Responsible for ensuring Council's compliance with the regulations and requirements of relevant legislation and standards.

Manager Governance and Risk
Accountable to the General Manager for the implementation of the Information and Records Strategy to ensure continued management of all Council records.

Coordinator Records Management
Responsible for the protection, safe custody and management of all records, ensuring continued accessibility. Ensures the Information and Records Training and

Education Program targets skills to support compliance with the Information & Records Management Strategy. Ensures that no records are destroyed except as authorised by the Retention and Disposal Schedule or Normal Administrative Practice.

Directors/Managers

Ensure that records which are created and managed within their section comply with the Records Management Policy and Procedures, are registered only in the approved recordkeeping systems and that staff attend the Information and Records Training and Education Program as required.

- Managers are responsible for monitoring their staff to ensure that they create and capture records of business transactions

- Content Manager is provided to staff to create and maintain records. Business rules for capture of official records are documented and published on the intranet. Staff are obligated to attend Information and Records Training

- The Coordinator Records Management manages the Information and Records Training and Education Program which sits under this policy

- Council no longer supports the creation of hard copy records. All information and records must be created or captured electronically as per Council business processes.

All staff

All Council staff must

- Comply with this Information & Records Management Policy and its supporting procedures

- Keep full and accurate records of Council business in the approved recordkeeping systems and not within network, group or personal drives or using USBs

- Ensure by default open access to all records unless that record needs protection

- Not dispose of or destroy any records.

Contractors

Manage records that they create on behalf of Bayside Council according to this policy and its supporting procedures.

3.2   Compliance and Breaches

The Manager Governance and Risk is responsible for making and administering arrangements for the monitoring of the Information and Records Management Policy. Reports of noncompliance and breaches in policy will be reported to the General Manager.

Information and Records Management must comply with relevant legislation and approved standards and procedures.

- The Coordinator Records Management is responsible for implementation of the Information & Records Management Strategy and the business owner of the recordkeeping system

- Each Section Manager is accountable for the effective management of information and records and the promulgation of the Information & Records Management Strategy across their business unit

- All staff are responsible for the capture, maintenance and security of records related to their business transactions
- All staff are responsible for ensuring continued and appropriate access to Council's information and records.

3.3   Procedures

The Manager Governance & Risk may approve procedures that support this policy.

4   Document control

4.1   Review

This policy will be reviewed every twelve (12) months in line with the Information and Records Strategy or when changes to legislation occur.

4.2   Related documents

- Bayside Information & Records Management Strategy

4.3   Version history

This document is based on a previous Rockdale City Council policy last adopted on 21 September 2011 with subsequent minor amendments.

Version	Release Date	Author	Reason for Change
1.0	12/06/2019	Coordinator Records Management	New document
1.1	16/09/2021	Coordinator Governance	Added procedures reference. Approved by Manager Governance & Risk.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

This glossary has been compiled from the State Records Authority Glossary of Recordkeeping Terms. 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

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 4390-1996, Part 1.4.19

Recordkeeping systems

Information systems which capture, maintain and provide access to records over time. AS 4390-1996, Part 1. Clause 4.20

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 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.

State archive

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