

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY

This policy establishes the Shire's position in relation to suitable definitions, accessibility to records, destruction of records, management of ephemeral records and training.

Records are recognised as an important information resource for the Shire and it is accepted that sound records management practices will contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Shire. Due to legislative requirements, the Shire is obliged to maintain a records management system that completely, accurately and reliably creates and maintains evidential records, and to dispose of those records only through an approved scheme.

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

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Recordkeeping Policy are to:

- Operationalise the Shire's Record Keeping Plan;
- Provide record keeping principles and processes that identify, capture and protect the Shire's corporate records of continuing value for legal, financial, administrative, accountability and historical purposes.
- Ensure business transactions and activities are created and managed in a manner that is compliant, relevant, reliable and accurate.
- Ensure the Shire meets its statutory obligations, including those consistent with the *State Records Act 2000*; and
- Define the roles and responsibilities of those individuals who manage or perform recordkeeping processes on behalf of the Shire.

APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all government records created or received by a Shire employee, contractor or an organisation performing outsourced services on behalf of the Shire, regardless of the physical format, storage location or date of creation.

DEFINITIONS

Corporate Record

Means any hard-copy, digital or online record that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. It conveys information essential or relevant in decision-making processes.
- b. It conveys information upon which others will, or may, use to make decisions affecting the Shire's operations, rights and obligations under legislation.
- c. It commits the Shire to certain courses of action, the commitment of resources or provision of services.
- d. It conveys information about matters of public safety or public interest, or involves information upon which contractual undertakings are entered into.

e. The information is likely to be needed for future use or is of historical value.

Ephemeral Records

Means any record that has no continuing value to the Shire, including duplicated records and/or those that have only short-term value with little or no on-going administrative, fiscal, legal, evidential or historical value. The Shire uses the guidelines contained within the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records to determine which records are considered ephemeral.

General Disposal Authority

Means the General Disposal Authority for Local Government records (the schedule). It is designed to provide consistency throughout Local Governments in disposal activities and decisions. It is a continuing authority for the disposal and archival of records which document a Local Government's operations.

Government Record

Means a record created or received by a government organisation or a government organisation employee in the course of their work for the organisation.

Record

Means any record of information however recorded, and includes:

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

Record Keeping Plan

The Record Keeping Plan ensures that records are created, managed and maintained over time and disposed of in accordance with principles and standards issued by the State Records Commission. It is the primary means of providing evidence of compliance with the Act, and that best practices have been implemented in the organisation.

Records Disposal

Disposal is by way of depositing records in the State Archives, managing the records as designated by State Archives, or by destruction in accordance with policy.

Significant Records

Significant records contain information, which is of administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential or historical value, and are not recorded elsewhere on the public record. They describe a topic, record who was involved, why a decision was made, and may include actual guidelines.

State Record

A parliamentary or government record.

Vital Records

Vital records are essential to the continued business of the Shire. Vital Records include those that protect the rights of the individual and the organisation, and are absolutely essential for reconstruction in the event of a disaster.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Elected Members

All elected members are to create, collect and retain records relating to their role as an Elected Member for the Shire in a manner consistent with legislation and the Shire's procedures for record keeping. Party political and personal records are exempt.

Elected Member's will deliver the records they have received or created in the conduct of their role as soon as practicable to the Chief Executive Officer electronically (via email, dropbox, flashdrive) or in person.

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer is to ensure that an organisational system for the capture and management of records is maintained that is compliant with legislative requirements. In accordance with section 5.41 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Chief Executive Officer is to "Ensure that records and documents of the local government are properly kept for the purpose of this act and any other written law."

Management

Management is to ensure that all employees under their supervision comply with this policy, associated records management procedures and the Record Keeping Plan.

All Staff

All staff (including contactors) are to create, collect and retain records relating to Shire business activities they perform. They are to identify significant and ephemeral records, ensure significant records are captured into the record keeping system in place, and that all records are handled in a manner consistent with legislation and the Shire's policies and procedures for record keeping.

RECORD LIFE-CYCLE

Creation of Records

All Elected members, staff and contractors 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.

Capture & Control of Records

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

Custodianship of Records

The Shire recognises its records as a government-owned asset and will ensure they are managed as such. Ownership and proprietary interest of records created or collected during

the course of business (including those from outsourced bodies or contractors) is vested in the Shire.

Security & 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.

Access to Records

Access to the Shire's records by staff and contractors will be in accordance with designated access and security classifications. Access to the Shire's records by the general public will be in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* and *Local Government Act 1995*. All such requests are to be administered by the Chief Executive Officer or person designated to act in this position. Access to the Shire's records by elected members will be via the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Appraisal, Retention & Disposal of Records

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

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

The *State Records Act 2000 Act* (the Act) has specific provisions relating to the responsibility to create, manage and dispose of records in accordance with principles and standards issues by the State Records Commission. In accordance with Section 19 of the Act, the Shire will ensure it endorses and maintains a Record Keeping Plan approved by the State Records Commission.

All Elected Members, employees and contractors are responsible for maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of all business transactions, and ensuring all corporate records are retained within the Shire's official recordkeeping systems at the point of creation, regardless of the format, being in accordance with the following:

- *Criminal Code Act 1913*
- *Electronic Transactions Act 2011*
- *Evidence Act 1906*
- *Financial Management Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Limitations Act 2005*
- *Local Government Act 1995*

Record of Policy Review					
Version	Author	Council Adoption	Resolution	Reason for Review	Review Date

01	Graeme Fardon	29 May 2008	299-07/08		
02	Graeme Fardon / Consultant Kim Boulton	20 December 2018	115-18/19	<i>Policy Review Project – 20/09/2018</i>	
03	Graeme Fardon	27 February 2020	119-19/20	Policy to be amended as per Consultant IRIS recommendation.	17/02/2020
04	Graeme Fardon	17 December 2020	97-20/21	Biennial Policy Review	December 2020
05	Nicole Gibbs	26/5/2022	182-21/22	Policy review	26/5/2024