

Records Management Policy

Policy Endorsement:	Endorsement required by Council		
Directorate:	Corporate Services		
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Records Management		
Policy Type:	Compliance		
File Number:	A4560758	Version:	004
1 st Adopted by Council	24 January 2011 Minute No. 733	Last Adopted by Council:	24 July 2017 Minute No. 318
Review Period:	Annually	Next Review:	July 2018

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council's commitment to and legislative obligations in maintaining full and accurate records of all business activities is achieved and all staff are aware of their obligations when creating and managing corporate records.

2. Policy Statement

The records of City of Greater Dandenong are a strategic corporate asset and will be managed as such, from point of creation or capture through to their eventual disposal.

Creation, use, and disposal of business records will be managed in accordance with all legislative and business requirements, including, but not limited to, the *Public Records Act 1973* and the mandatory Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) Recordkeeping Standards (*Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard*).

The management of information and records owned by or in the custody of City of Greater Dandenong will be strategically planned, implemented and managed.

The Records Management Policy ensures that records reasonably likely to be required as evidence in current or future legal proceedings are not destroyed, concealed, rendered illegible, undecipherable or incapable of identification.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All employees:** whether permanent or temporary, including contractors and volunteers;
- **All Councillors:** in undertaking their duties as elected representatives of Council;
- **All Records:** created on behalf of Council, across all media or formats (e.g. hardcopy, digital, email fax and websites), in all business systems and across all Council functions (including core and administrative);
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4. References

Legislation

- Public Records Act 1973
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Evidence Act 2008
- Crimes Act 1958
- Electronic Transaction Act 2000
- Local Government Act 1989
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Civil Procedures Act 2010 (specifically sections 55A to 55C)
- Health Records Act 2001
- Building Act 1993
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Standards

- Australian Standards AS ISO 15489 (Records Management)
- Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) Standards available at <http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/standards-and-policy>

Council Policies and Codes of Conduct

(to be read in conjunction with this Records Management Policy)

- Privacy and Personal Information Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Information Security Policy 2015
- Risk Management
- Digitisation Plan 2014
- Staff and Councillor Codes of Conduct

All of the above Council Policies, Codes of Conduct and Digitisation Plan can be found either on the Intranet (Webstar) or on the procedures area in Objective.

5. Definitions

For a full glossary of Records and Information Management terms see Appendix 1 (page 7-8)

6. Council Policy

Responsibilities

(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)

Chief Executive Officer under Section 13 of the Public Records Act 1973 as administrative head of Council has specific legislative responsibility for records management. Section 13 states he:

- Must ensure that full and accurate records of the business of that office are made;
- Is responsible for the establishment of a program of records management within the office in accordance with Standards set by the keeper of Public Records;

Directors are responsible for corporate decisions which ensure the Records Management Strategy and Policy supports and compliments the broader Strategic and Corporate planning activities.

Manager of Information Management Services is responsible for:

- Providing and maintaining secure systems for the capture, storage and retrieval of records, including regular backup and business continuity planning considerations;
- And has strategic responsibility for recordkeeping;

Records Coordinator is responsible for:

- Implementing the Records Management Strategy;
- The day-to-day running of the systems, practices and processes related to the records management function, including the training of Records Management staff to enable them to support Council officers in their record keeping duties;
- Responsible for implementing a program of quality assurance checking and compliance monitoring of record keeping activities;

Department /Business Managers and Supervisors are responsible for monitoring staff under their supervision to ensure that they understand and comply with records management policies and procedures. Managers and supervisors are also responsible for fostering and supporting a culture within their work group that supports good recordkeeping.

All Staff are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

Councillors are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

Volunteers are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities where necessary and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

Contracts Manager is responsible for managing record keeping obligations of contractors by including records management clauses in contracts with organisations performing activities on behalf of Council or providing services to Council.

External Contractors and service providers are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it. All documents and files must be returned to Council as set out in contractual agreements.

Recordkeeping Systems

Creation Capture and Storage of Records

(Ref: Pros 11/07 Capture Standard - PROS 11/01 Storage Standard - PROS 10/02 Digitization requirements)

- Official records must be created in all instances where there is a need for Council or an individual to be accountable for, and/or provide evidence of, decisions made and actions taken.
- Hardcopy records must be digitised as soon as possible.
- Records of corporate value including records that commit council to a course of action or records that state a council opinion, created when using social media applications or mobile devices, must be captured into Objective.
- Information received from another organisation must be handled in accordance with agreed procedures (e.g. Memorandums of Understanding) or in line with specific security classification handling requirements.
- Official records must be captured into corporate recordkeeping systems upon creation or receipt, in a controlled and systematic manner. Appropriate catalogue selected and mandatory metadata populated (*PROS 11/09 Control 2.1 Metadata*).
- Council's primary Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS) is Objective. All incoming correspondence of corporate value (hardcopy, emails and faxes) received by Council should be saved into Objective by the recipient.
- Council also maintains some 'line of business' applications that store data or records. In some instances these system may have recordkeeping functionality and integrate with Objective. Where this functionality does not exist, records generated from 'line of business' applications must be captured into Objective.
- The following systems/tools do not provide adequate recordkeeping functionality and must not be used to capture or maintain corporate records:
 - Hard copy systems not controlled by Council's EDRMS;
 - Email folders;
 - Local PC drives;
 - Portable storage devices (USB sticks);
 - Shared (network) drives;
- Hardcopy records must be stored in appropriate containers and environments (Ref: PROS 11/01 *Storage*).

Retention and Disposal of Records:

(Ref: *Disposal Standard PROS 10/13*)

- All official records of Council must only be disposed of in accordance with the provisions set out in the Public Records Act (Vic) 1973. All official records in all formats have retention timeframes associated to them under this Act.
- Except under N.A.P. (Normal Administrative Practice) staff should not dispose of records without the approval of the Records Management Unit. Disposal includes destruction, transfer to secondary storage, transfer ownership or custody to another party.
- Unauthorised destruction of corporate records is an offence under the Evidence Act 2008 and may expose Council to a range of risks including:
 - An inability to comply with regulatory and legislative responsibilities such as Freedom of Information Act 1982 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014;

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- Inability to provide access to information requested by legal discovery;
- All official records must be able to be found on demand or within a timeframe appropriate to business needs.

Access, Protection and Security

(Ref: Pros 10/10 Access Standard and Pros 11/09 Control Standard)

- An open access policy applies, so unless a restriction is necessary, all records' metadata must be available
- All access to official records must take place in a managed and controlled manner and in accordance with PROV Standards and Council's Information Privacy and Health Records and Freedom of Information Policies.
- All staff must ensure the reliability of their official records as evidence of their business. Official records must be a reliable source of what has been said, done or approved to be done.
- The security, privacy and confidentiality of Council records must be maintained at all times.

Records Management

Contract Management

(Ref: Pros 10/10.G2 Managing Records of Outsourced Activities)

Any contract that leads to the creation or transfer of council records must include recordkeeping clauses that ensure:

- full and accurate records of the activity are created;
- ownership and custody of records is clear;
- records are not disposed of without proper authorisation;
- Government access to records is assured; and
- records are stored appropriately and kept secure

Contractors must be trained in the record management requirements.

Before a contract is completed, terminated or expires, all records must be returned to Council custody and saved to the appropriate recordkeeping system.

Business Process Management

(Ref: Pros 10/17 Operations Management Standard)

- All department and business unit processes and procedures must include instructions to manage the records created, received, viewed or shared during the process.

Records Management Training

(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)

- All staff including contractors and volunteers must receive Records Management Training appropriate to their role within one month upon commencing employment.

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Records Management Reporting

(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)

- The Executive Management Team must receive regular updates on records management progress and the operations of Council's Records Management Unit processes and practices including the creation, capture and disposal of records, the disclosure of information and any potential risk management issues.

Monitor, Review and Endorsement

(Ref: Pros10/10 Strategic Management Pros10/17 Operations Management Standards)

- This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Records Management Coordinator, annually or earlier should events dictate. Post review and prior to adoption it should be endorsed by Council.

Communications

(Ref: Pros 10/17 Operations Management Standard)

- This policy is to be made available to all directors, managers, coordinators, staff contractors and volunteers of City of Greater Dandenong via one or more of the following:
 - Induction training
 - Records Management Procedural training
 - EDRMS training
 - Intranet (Webstar)
 - Reference in procedures

Compliance and Exemptions

(Ref: Pros10/10 Strategic Management Pros10/17 Operations Management Standards)

- Compliance with the Records Management policy will ensure that City of Greater Dandenong can demonstrate evidence and accountability in addition to providing information about decisions made and activities undertaken for as long as is required.
- Adherence to this policy is mandatory (refer City of Greater Dandenong Code of Conduct) for all City of Greater Dandenong staff, Councillors, Contractors and Volunteers. No exemptions exist for this policy.

Appendix 1

Glossary of Records and Information Management Terms

Archives	Those public records which have been appraised as having continuing value for reference and research purposes. Sometimes called 'corporate memory'.
Archiving	The generic term used to describe the sentencing and disposal or retention of records.
Capture	A deliberate action, which results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. The process includes registering a document or record, deciding which class it is to be classified to in a file plan, adding further metadata to it, and storing it in the system, e.g. an electronic document & records management system (EDRMS).
Classification	The intellectual process of grouping together records which have some elements of similarity. The term refers to both the total concept and individual working processes.
Content management	Managing the information content of enterprise portals, intranets, and extranets to internet sites.
Disposal	The removal of records from Council custody either through authorised disposal or by transfer to the custody of the Public Record Office.
Disposition	The range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions.
Document (noun)	Recorded information or object that can be treated as a unit. A document may be on paper, microform, magnetic or any other electronic medium. It may include any combination of text, data, graphics, sound, moving pictures or any other forms of information. Documents precede <i>records</i> in the information life cycle. Records are formed by <i>declaration</i> of documents.
Document management	The management and control of documents with emphasis on their dynamic and transactional nature including indexing and retrieval, revision and version control, work flow and information content.
EDRMS	Electronic Document & Records Management System A system with the functionality of a document management and records management system combined in one system. Sometimes referred to as a Content Management System.
File or folder	A collection of records physically brought together in a recognisable context.
Information management	Information management describes the means by which an organisation efficiently plans, collects, creates, organises, uses, controls, disseminates and disposes of its information, both documents deemed as records and information.
Information systems	Ways of providing human-readable information to users such that it is relevant to their business objectives.
Knowledge management	Managing tacit knowledge (held in an individual's brain in the form of know-how and experience) and explicit knowledge (recorded independently of humans).
Local Government RDA	A Retention and Disposal Authority authorised by the PROV, to guide the retention and disposal of function specific Local Government records.

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Metadata	Descriptive and cataloguing data which systematically identifies various attributes of a class of items such as file/folder and documents.
N.A.P.	The destruction of some public records is permitted under normal administrative practice (NAP). NAP covers the destruction of ephemeral material of a facilitative or duplicate nature created, acquired or collected by public sector employees during the course of their duties.
Public Records	A public record is any record made or received by a person employed in a public office in the course of his or her duties.
Record	Recorded information in any form, on any medium (paper or electronic) created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.
Recordkeeping	Making and maintaining complete, accurate, reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.
Recordkeeping System (RKS)	Refers to the system used to register record and house business information.
Records Management	Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.
Registration	The act of giving a record a unique identity in a record management system.

Reference Materials:

- ECM Step Program for Records Management Maturity Report 2015
- Records Management Strategy 2015-2017
- Information Security Policy 2015