



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	RECORDS MANAGEMENT
Policy Number	P-2014/21
Responsible Directorate	CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY
Responsible Officer	RECORDS COORDINATOR
Date of Adoption	18 MARCH 2014
Resolution Number	G/14/1926
Date Review Due	18 MARCH 2017

1.0 PURPOSE:

This Policy seeks to ensure that records generated in the conduct of business activities of Gladstone Regional Council are adequately created, captured and managed through their life cycle in accordance with best practice and legislative requirements. ~~within the context of Gladstone Regional Council's principle records management system Enterprise Content Management (ECM) as well as all other records and systems including but not limited to Pathway, various databases and hardcopy records.~~

2.0 SCOPE:

2.1 Business Activity

This Policy applies to all records created, received and managed by Gladstone Regional Council staff, elected members, employees and contracted service providers ~~operating across all locations in the conduct of business on behalf of Gladstone Regional Council.~~

2.2 Record Types

~~This Policy applies to a range of record types that capture evidence of business activity.~~

2.3 Formats

~~This Policy applies to records in all formats. These formats include (but not exclusive to) paper, electronic (including e-mail).~~

2.4 E-mail Management

- ~~E-mail has the same evidentiary weight as any other document capturing information pertaining to the conduct of Gladstone Regional Council business.~~
- ~~E-mail is to be captured in an appropriate records management system in context with other related documents pertaining to business activity.~~

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

- ~~Building Act 1975~~
- ~~Electronic Transactions Act (Queensland) 2001~~
- ~~Environmental Protection Act 1994~~
- ~~Right to Information Act 2009~~
- ~~Information Privacy Act 2009~~
- ~~Health Act 1937~~
- ~~Sustainable Planning Act 2009~~
- ~~Judicial Review Act 1991~~
- ~~Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)~~
- ~~Local Government Regulation 2012~~
- ~~Public Records Act 2002 (Qld)~~
- ~~Right to Information Act 2009~~
- ~~Information Privacy Act 2009~~
- ~~Evidence Act 1977~~
- ~~Electronic Transactions Act 2001 (Qld)~~
- ~~Other legislation as defined in Schedule 4 of the Local Government Act 2009 as a 'Local Government Act'~~
- ~~Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008~~

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- ~~AS ISO 15489: Australian Standard for Records Management~~
- ~~Council records, A guideline for mayors, councillors, CEOs and council employees, July 2019 (Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland)~~
- ~~Your Social Media and You, A guide for elected council members in Queensland, Office of the Independent Assessor~~
- ~~Queensland State Archives Records Governance Policy~~
- ~~(QSA) IS31: Retention and Disposal of Public Records~~
- ~~Queensland State Archives (QSA) IS40: Recordkeeping~~
- ~~Recordkeeping Improvement Project Final Report – 31 January 2013~~
- ~~Departmental Recordkeeping Guides – 2013~~
- ~~Gladstone Regional Council Digitisation Defensible Process – Dispose of Physical Source Records after Digitisation Disposal Policy & Procedure – July 2010~~
- ~~Mayor and Councillors Records Management Policy & Guidelines – October 2010~~
- ~~Records Management Unit ~~Cheat Sheets/~~Reference Guides and Procedures~~

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in the interpretation of this policy the following definitions apply:

- ~~**Business Classification Scheme (BCS)** – means a mapping of the functions and activities of the agency derived from the analysis of business activity, containing terms and scope notes that represent and describe functions, activities, transactions or other elements and show their relationships. The structure of the scheme is hierarchical, moving from the general to the specific.~~
- ~~**Document** – means recorded information or object which can be treated as unit. Some documents are records because they have been part of a business transaction, or were created to document such a transaction. Conversely, some documents are not records because they do no function as evidence of a business transaction.~~

Leader means the Executive Team, Managers, Team Leaders and any other supervisory position that reports to a General Manager (i.e. specialists) of the business.

Metadata means structured information that describes and/or allows users to find, manage, control, understand or preserve other information over time.

Record is as defined under Section 6 (What is a public record) of the *Public Records Act 2002*.

~~**Record** means recorded information created or received by an entity in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs that provides evidence of the business or affairs and includes;~~

- ~~a) anything on which there is writing~~
- ~~b) anything on which there are marks, figures, symbols or perforations having a meaning for persons, including persons qualified to interpret them~~
- ~~c) anything from which sounds, images or writings can be reproduced without the aid of anything else, or~~
- ~~d) a map, plan, drawing or photograph.~~

Recordkeeping means the act of making and keeping evidence and memory of ~~government~~ Council business in the form of recorded information.

Retention and Disposal Schedule means a document which is issued by the Queensland State Archivist advising of retention periods for public records and when those records are considered appropriate for disposal. It defines the temporary or permanent status, retention periods, disposal triggers, and consequent disposal actions authorised for classes of records described in it.

~~- **Retention and Disposal Schedule** means a document which is issued by the State Archivist authorizing the disposal of public records. It defines the temporary or permanent status, retention periods, disposal triggers, and consequent disposal actions authorized for classes of records described in it.~~

~~— **Vital Records** means those records without which an agency could not operate. They contain information needed to re-establish the agency in the event of a disaster and satisfy ongoing core business responsibilities. Vital records are those which protect the assets and interests of the agency as well as those of its clients and stakeholders and are usually associated with legal and fiscal matters.~~

~~Source — Queensland State Archives — Glossary of Archival and Recordkeeping Terms Version 2.3 December 2010~~

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

6.1 Introduction

Public records are the cornerstone of an accountable and democratic society. They allow scrutiny from the public of the decisions made by those who are elected or employed to act on their behalf.

Effective recordkeeping allows Council to:

- *meet its legislative requirements and responsibilities*
- *protect the rights and entitlements of ratepayers*
- *protect and help defend against complaints or accusations of wrongdoing*

- *make robust and consistent decisions*
- *promote confidence in the authenticity and integrity of information*
- *support efficient and transparent business practices*
- *provide evidence of decisions and actions.¹*

6.1 INTRODUCTION

~~Good recordkeeping practices not only supports Gladstone Regional Council staff in meeting their legal obligations but it is also supportive of Gladstone Regional Council's strategic and business objectives.~~

~~By creating and capturing full and accurate records Gladstone Regional Council is able to work efficiently and effectively in supporting ongoing business activities and customer service, meet accountability requirements and community expectations.~~

6.2 Responsibilities

6.2.1 Mayor, Councillors, Employees

The Mayor, Councillors (elected members) and Employees of Council have the following responsibilities in relation to recordkeeping:

- ensure records relating to Council activities, actions and decisions which are created or received in the capacity as an elected member or employee are captured, described and stored in an approved recordkeeping or business system
- ensure that records created by contracted service providers or others (ie. volunteers, work experience students, etc) involved in Council activities are captured in an approved recordkeeping or business system
- ensure records are not destroyed relating to Council activities, actions and decisions unless it is authorised under an approval or authority from the Chief Executive Officer or other authorised person
- ensure the safe custody of records
- protect the privacy of personal information contained in Council records
- ensure all information contained in Council records is objectively expressed, correct, up-to-date and not misleading
- comply with Council's Records Management Policy and associated procedures, training and guidelines
- elected members are to follow Section 6.5 of this policy

6.2.2 Chief Executive Officer

In addition to the obligations outlined in Section 6.2.1, the Chief Executive Officer has the following specific responsibilities for records management:

- ensuring compliant recordkeeping practices are established for the business
- ensuring the safe custody of all Council records
- ensuring the business makes and keeps full and accurate records of activities and have regard to relevant policies, standards and guidelines made by the Queensland State Archivist.

6.2.3 Leaders

Leaders are to ensure that:

¹ Council records: A guideline for mayors, councillors, CEOs and council employees, July 2019
ECM File Reference: Cm28.1

- all staff under their supervision are aware of and comply with their recordkeeping responsibilities
- establish internal processes for teams and individuals that require support and assistance in complying with recordkeeping responsibilities.

6.2.4 Records Team

The Records team will provide the following support services to the organisation:

- register and distribute incoming records as required by management
- oversee the establishment, monitoring and maintenance standards for recordkeeping and records management across Council as a whole through regular audit and monitoring programs
- provide professional advice and assistance to those with recordkeeping responsibilities as required
- develop, review and deliver training for those who have recordkeeping responsibilities where directed by management
- Manage Council's records in accordance with the *Public Records Act 2002* and Retention and Disposal Schedules
- Arrange under sub-delegation disposal or transfer of records under *S.26 of the Public Records Act 2002*.

6.2 RECORD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Gladstone Regional Council Records Management Program will include the following areas:-

- ~~Strategic — ensure that records management addresses policy & procedures, business continuity (vital records), compliance auditing, outsourcing and training aspects.~~
- ~~Operational — ensure that records which are evidence of business activity are adequately created, captured, described, retained and stored in a manner that meets obligations under relevant legislation~~
- ~~Technical — ensure that records which are evidence of business activity are adequately managed through a legally compliant records management system~~
- ~~Staff — ensure that the Records Management Program is adequately resourced by appropriately experienced records management staff.~~

6.3 Approved Recordkeeping and Business Systems

The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to approve the recordkeeping and business systems that will be used to manage the records of the business. Approved systems will be notified to those with recordkeeping responsibilities through training and awareness activities.

6.3 STAFF BENEFITS

Good records management can provide the following benefits:

- ~~*Risk Management* — mitigating risk by meeting compliance requirements;~~
- ~~*Knowledge Management* — capturing staff knowledge for reuse and leveraging;~~
- ~~*Change Management* — ensure better management of documents in times of staff change over and organisational restructures;~~
- ~~*Business Processes* — support for policy formulation and managerial decision making as well as better performance of business activities in the Council.~~

~~Inadequate records management ultimately has a detrimental impact on GRC conduct of business. Examples of inadequate records management includes:~~

- ~~• *Compliance* – failure of employees or systems to make, capture, describe, store, archive records in appropriate records keeping systems leads to lack of compliance with legal and accountability requirements;~~
- ~~• *Cost & Time* – Increase costs associated with the storage, identification and retrieval of accurate records in a timely and cost effective manner;~~
- ~~• *Customer Service* – Inadequate recordkeeping impacts on the quality of services that is provided to stakeholders;~~
- ~~• *Knowledge Management* – the loss of intellectual capital documented through records with staff turnover and/or organisational restructure.~~

6.4 Identifying a Council Record

A record of Council is any form of recorded information, created or received by the business in the exercise of its statutory, administrative or other public responsibilities, or for a related purpose. It is any information that is:

- evidence of a decision or advice;
- evidence of a transaction or an action taken;
- created or received to meet legal requirements, community expectations or business needs.

Records can be created in digital, paper or other formats and include but are not limited to:

- information recorded on paper
- diaries
- videos
- images
- sound recordings
- text messages
- emails
- social media interactions
- data entered and held in business systems
- messaging applications
- film / microfiche / photographs
- other hardcopy and digital mediums.

Examples of a record include:

- ✓ minutes of Council meetings and the notes or recordings used to make those minutes
- ✓ decisions resulting from discussions between councillors about the administration or management of the local government
- ✓ rate notices
- ✓ dog registrations and renewals
- ✓ an email advising staff of a work health and safety meeting
- ✓ a text with a decision to approve funding for a project
- ✓ a post-it note with instructions to act on a report
- ✓ a Council facebook post with a complaint from a ratepayer or resident
- ✓ a video or audio recording of a meeting about progress on a Council project
- ✓ a Twitter or Instagram post talking about an upcoming Council event.

Information relating to the following activities are not records of Council:

- × personal activities and interactions with family and friends that do not involve Council business
- × political membership or activities.

6.5 Specific Recordkeeping Requirements for Mayor and Councillors (elected members)

The following specific recordkeeping requirements apply to elected members as part of their responsibilities under Section 6.2.1:

- **Email:** elected members must use their Council email account for Council related business. Any emails regarding Council business received or sent from personal email accounts must be onforwarded to the elected member's Council email account. Alternatively, emails received or sent from personal email accounts relating to Council business may be onforwarded directly to the Councillors nominated support resource or to info@gladstone.qld.gov.au for recordkeeping with an accompanying note if required (ie. for file only; for file and actioning please).
- **Elected Member Social Media:** elected members social media accounts (i.e. facebook, instagram, twitter, websites, messaging applications, and other emerging technologies) which contain Council related business must be captured for recordkeeping.

It is the elected members responsibility to manage their own official social media platforms. Elected members must comply with the business's processes on the capture of social media activity for recordkeeping. Appropriate training will be provided as required.

Posts by elected members related purely to personal activities, including political activities and election campaigning are not Council records and are not required to be captured under this policy.

- **Complaints and Requests:** requests for service or complaints concerning Council business must be referred to the info@gladstone.qld.gov.au for recordkeeping and response.
- **Hardcopy Diaries:** if elected members maintain a hardcopy diary for Council related business, these diaries must be forwarded for retention in Council's recordkeeping systems within 12 months of the last entry in the diary being made or when the elected member leaves office. Elected members may also be asked to provide their diaries where a Right to Information or Information Privacy application seeks information related to these records.
- **Meetings and Other Verbal Exchanges:** Elected members who conduct meetings / discussions with individuals related to Council business should summarise or record an account of key issues and outcomes discussed where there are decisions or undertaking made on behalf of Council. These records must be forwarded to the nominated support resource or emailed to info@gladstone.qld.gov.au for recordkeeping.
- **Other Records:** Elected members who directly receive any form of record related to Council business directly from an individual or organisation must ensure that they are forwarded to their nominated support resource or email to info@gladstone.qld.gov.au for recordkeeping.

~~6.4 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES~~

~~This policy will apply to the entire Gladstone Regional Council staff operating across all locations.~~

~~The Council requires all Councillors, staff and contractors to comply with its recordkeeping policies, procedures and guidelines. Council will provide training and support to ensure this compliance.~~

~~1. Executive~~

~~The Council Chief Executive Officer has a duty to ensure Gladstone Regional Council creates and preserves full and accurate records for legislative and accountability purposes.~~

~~2. Records Management Unit~~

~~Formal responsibility for the recordkeeping program will be delegated to the Records Management Unit. This role will include:~~

- ~~• Operationalise associated program, policies, procedures, audit and training programs;~~
- ~~• Establish, monitor and maintain standards for recordkeeping and records management across the Council as a whole;~~
- ~~• Manage ECM, other records systems and individual records and other information;~~
- ~~• Authorise the disposal of records in accordance with the Retention and Disposal Schedules; and~~
- ~~• Records Management staff are responsible for registering documents as well as e-mails from the inquiry address~~

~~3. Staff~~

~~Each staff member is responsible for creating and registering records that are evidence of business activity (inclusive of e-mails). All employees have the following obligations regarding recordkeeping:~~

- ~~• Create, capture, describe and store records to support the conduct of Council activities;~~
- ~~• Capture records into approved recordkeeping or business system;~~
- ~~• Do not destroy records without authority of the authorised personnel in conjunction with the Council CEO;~~
- ~~• Ensure safe custody of all files and documents allocated to them;~~
- ~~• Protect the privacy of personal information contained in Council records;~~
- ~~• Ensure all information contained in Gladstone Regional Council records is objectively expressed, correct, up-to-date and not misleading; and~~
- ~~• Comply with Records Management Policy and Procedures~~

6.6 AUDIT FOR COMPLIANCE Audit and Compliance Program

The Records team will arrange for the periodic audit and review of its recordkeeping and business systems to ensure compliance with the business's legislative requirements.

These audits will cover both macro and micro level activities as follows:

- Macro (by business unit) – review of business unit recordkeeping activities to ensure appropriate records are being captured, described and managed in accordance with legislative and business requirements.
- Micro (system orientated audits) – review of metadata entered into the recordkeeping and business systems such as document précis information, index assignment, document classification, security code, quality of digital images, date of registration and name of author, retention schedules.

6.7 RETENTION SCHEDULES Retention and Disposal of Records

The Queensland State Archive Retention and Disposal Schedules ~~are to be used across all locations in the sentencing of all files.~~ will be used in determining the retention and destruction/transfer of Council records. In cases where Queensland State Archives retention schedules do not cover a particular business activity, the relevant business unit, in consultation with the Records team are to develop relevant schedules for approval by the Chief Executive Officer and Queensland State Archives. ~~All Schedules must be inclusive of vital records.~~

6.8 Public Access to Records

Members of the public may apply for access to Council records under the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* or *Right to Information Act 2009*.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

Nil

8.0 REVIEW TRIGGER:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation/documents are amended or replaced.
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council
3. Periodic Review –3 years from date of adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

Originally Adopted	10 March 2009	09/131 (formerly Policy P-3.07.01)
Amendment 1	18 March 2014	G/14/1926

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LEISA DOWLING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER