



CITY OF PLAYFORD

Policy: RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

DATE ADOPTED	<i>April 2007</i>
LAST REVIEW DATE	<i>March 2006</i>
NEXT REVIEW DATE	<i>April 2011</i>
RESPONSIBILITY	<i>Knowledge and System Services</i>

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the creation and management of records within The City of Playford. The City of Playford is committed to establishing and maintaining recordkeeping practices that meet its business needs, accountability requirements and stakeholder's expectations.

The policy applies to records management for all Council business, including that in electronic form. It concerns records that are created, collected, processed, used, sentenced, stored, and disposed of in the conduct of official business. Official records are also known as 'Corporately Significant' records.

It applies to all council staff and elected members, volunteers, trainees, work experience placements, independent consultants and contractors, and other authorised personnel offered access to council's information resources.

.....
Chief Executive Officer [REDACTED]

.....
Date

1. DEFINITIONS

The Australian Standard ISO 15489 defines a record as:

- *“Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transactions of business”. Irrespective of media or format.*

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish an appropriate framework for the management of all council records. Records document, support and underpin the business of Council, and provide a history of the region and add to the social history of the State and Nation.

Records provide evidence of decisions and actions and require specific practices to ensure that they are:

- Meaningful
- Accurate
- Valid
- Reliable

3. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

The State Records Act 1997 governs the legal obligations and responsibilities of local government in relation to the management of official records. Under this Act, Council has an obligation to maintain official records in its custody in good order and condition. This applies to both hard copy records and electronic records.

An ‘official record’ is a record made or received by the Council in the conduct of its business. Elected members and staff, as representatives of Council, create, receive, send, or forward records as part of their everyday duties and functions.

Official records are created and exist in various formats, including;

- hard copy (i.e. paper based)
- electronic (email, fax, telephone, digital images)

Council has an obligation to provide access to records under legislation such as the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*, and for legal processes such as discovery and subpoenas. Other persons or bodies such as the Ombudsman, Royal Commissions, the Courts, or auditors may also require access to the records.

The records management system is an essential part of corporate risk management.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The primary recordkeeping system of City of Playford is the electronic document management system (EDRMS) currently [REDACTED]. The EDRMS allows all corporate administrative records to be captured and stored, in addition original paper-based records can be captured through digital imaging (scanning). All records should be created and maintained within [REDACTED], unless creation is controlled and managed within another application such as [REDACTED].

The aims of a recordkeeping system are:

- To establish an effective and efficient record keeping system that ensures standardisation, protection, and retrieval of information.
- To ensure that the management of Council's information resources and records management system provides timely and comprehensive information to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations.
- To ensure the preservation of the Council's "corporate memory" through sound record keeping practices and the accurate capture and disposal of information to meet legal, evidential and accountability requirements.

City of Playford's recordkeeping system performs the following processes:

- The creation and capture of records;
- The storage of records;
- The protection of record integrity and authenticity;
- The security of records;
- Access to records; and
- The disposal of records in accordance with approved disposal authorities.

5. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Chief Executive Officer

The role of the Chief Executive Officer, as prescribed by Section 99 of the Local Government Act 1999, includes ensuring that records required under any legislation are properly kept and maintained.

Knowledge Services Team

Under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer, the Knowledge Services Team is assigned the responsibility of setting the strategic focus for recordkeeping. Additional responsibilities include:

- Establishing corporate standards for records management and recordkeeping
- Measuring performance against corporate standards
- Providing advice and assistance to council staff and Elected Members in fulfilling their record keeping responsibilities
- Working with stakeholders to ensure record keeping systems support organisational and public accountability
- The establishment of an effective and efficient environment that encourages standardisation, protection and retrieval of information that improves the level of quality and customer service.
- Promote observance of best practice by Council in the management of their records – as outlined under the 'Adequate Records Management Standard'.

All Managers and Coordinators

Are responsible for supporting and monitoring staff recordkeeping practices as defined by this policy. Managers should create, and support the creation of records by staff, as part of normal business practices.

Council staff and Elected Members

All Council Staff and Elected Members need to be aware of and comply with record keeping requirements related to the performance and exercise of their duties and functions.

The record keeping obligations of council staff and elected members include:

- Making records to support the conduct of their business activities, and
- Creating records that would otherwise not be created,
- Forwarding records to Knowledge Services unit for capture,
- Not destroying records without authority from the Knowledge Services Unit,
- Not losing records; and
- Being aware of records management procedures and responsibilities.

6. OBLIGATIONS OF RECORDS USERS

Council staff and Elected Members;

- Shall not intentionally damage, alter, dispose of or remove official records of the Council without authorisation to do so.
- Are required to handle council records with care and respect in a sensible manner to avoid damaging records and with a view to prolonging their life span.
- Shall ensure that council records in any format, including electronic documents and electronic messages (i.e. Emails), which they personally receive or send are captured in to council's record keeping system. Records must be readily accessible to meet business needs and accountability requirements.
- Add notes to documents that are captured to ensure ongoing integrity, reliability and accountability.
- Notify external stakeholders of their obligations to the City of Playford with reference to this policy.
- Be aware of the Copyright Act, drawings, plans, photographs etc are all protected by the copyright Act; therefore, copies should not be taken of these and handed out for public use i.e. Development/Building plans. This would also refer to advertising plans/drawings over the Web.
- Staff members of the Knowledge Services Team are required to follow authorised procedures in carrying out records management functions.

All official records including electronic records are to be captured and maintained as functioning records by preserving their structure, context and content. In order to maintain their value as evidence, Council records cannot be altered or manipulated for as long as they are retained.

Persons who breach this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the relevant Code of Conduct, and/or subject to criminal or civil proceedings as per the State Records Act 1997. Elected Members and staff should report breaches of this Policy to the Chief Executive Officer or their manager.

7. PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

As with any other corporate information the following privacy principles should apply to any council record;

- Personal information relating to an individual requires secure storage and must not be misused,
- Personal information should not be used except for a purpose to which it is relevant,
- Information must not be disclosed to a third person unless consented, or to prevent imminent threat to the life or health of the record-subject, or under law.

8. CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS

Official records of a sensitive or confidential nature should be captured in Council's Records Management System. The Knowledge Services Team will provide advice and assistance for handling this type of material.

9. EPHEMERAL RECORDS

A record is not required to be captured into Council's Management System if it is:

- Unsolicited product or advertising information ('junk' mail, brochures, pamphlets),
- A duplicate copy used for reference purposes,
- A personal communication that is in no way related to Council business,
- A magazine or published material (although articles may be clearly photocopied and sent to IMU for registration if deemed corporately relevant to Council's knowledge base); or
- An acknowledgement only of receipt of email (eg thank you, noted, etc.).

10. DESTRUCTION METHODS

Official records must be disposed of in accordance with the General Disposal Schedule No.20 for Local Government Authorities in South Australia. Council staff and elected members should contact the Knowledge Services Team for advice concerning the destruction of records.

Under the State Records Act illegal destruction of records could incur penalties of \$10,000 or 2 years imprisonment of the individual responsible.

11. RECORDS SECURITY

The security of all Council records is crucial, as records provide evidence of business transactions, support management decisions and ensure public accountability requirements are met. Records in all formats should be stored securely to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal.

Council staff are responsible for the safe custody of all files and documents that are allocated to them. Sensitive or confidential information should be placed in a secure storage area when not in use. When the action has been completed the file/documents should be returned to the Knowledge Services Unit for storage. File storage units should be locked overnight wherever possible to prevent unauthorised access. Council records are not to be stored at home or left in cars unattended as they could be lost or damaged or stolen. Vital records should be stored in protective or fire resistant conditions with suitable access conditions. Confidential records must be stored in locked storage cabinets.

12. OTHER RELEVANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Other relevant council documents that should be read in conjunction with this policy include:

- Information Technology Policy,
- Code of Conduct for Elected Members and Council staff,
- [REDACTED] procedures and training manuals,

Other relevant legislation includes:

- Local Government Act 1999,
- *Freedom of Information Act 1991*,
- *Copyright Act 1968*,
- Standards and codes of practice,
- State Records Act 1997,
- Information Privacy Principles Guidelines of South Australia,
- Australian Standards AS ISO 15489, *Records Management*,
- *Development Act and Regulations 1993*.

13. APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 Records Management Procedure Manual for Elected Members

INTRODUCTION

The Elected Members Records Management Procedures has been developed to provide Elected Members with key information they need to know to implement the Records Management Policy.

The Procedures need to be read in conjunction with the Records Management Policy that was endorsed by Council in April 2006. These Procedures will be reviewed in line with the Records Management Policy.

CONTACT DETAILS

Documents received/sent by Elected members that has 'corporate value'	Where to send
MAIL RECEIVED – Any incoming mail received	Fax to Records [REDACTED] or hand to Governance
MAIL SENT – Any mail/letters sent ie. Word documents created.	Email electronic copy to [REDACTED] or fax to Records [REDACTED]
FAX – Any incoming/outgoing faxes	Fax to Records [REDACTED] or hand to Governance
EMAIL - Any incoming/outgoing email	Email to [REDACTED]
Enquiries to [REDACTED] – Team Manager Knowledge and System Services	Ph – [REDACTED] or Email – [REDACTED]

What is a Record?

A record is made or received by you in your role as an Elected Member.

Official records provide evidence of the functions and activities conducted by the Council.

Both paper-based and electronic records created as part of your role as an Elected Member is considered to be official records.

OVERVIEW OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Which documents need to be sent to the Records Department for registering?

Any document created or received by Elected Members in the course of their official duties should be forwarded to Records for registration if it:

- Requires a response or action by Council.
- Concerns a decision made by Elected Members on behalf of Council.
- Might be needed by other staff or Elected Members to perform their duties.
- Could cause Council embarrassment if it was lost.
- Petitions

If you are in doubt, please send to Records for assessing.

Which documents do not need to be sent to the Records Department for registering?

The following specific documents **do not** need to be forwarded to Records for registration:

- Election Material – Electioneering documents are private records of the Elected Member.
- Unsolicited product or advertising information ('junk' mail, brochures, pamphlets);
- A duplicate copy used for reference purposes;
- Personal communication that is in no way related to Council business;
- A magazine or published material (although articles may be clearly photocopied and sent to Records for registration if deemed corporately relevant to Council's knowledge base); or
- An acknowledgement only of receipt of email (eg thank you, noted, etc.)

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING EXTERNAL INCOMING MAIL

Documents Received by Council

An Elected Member may elect in writing not to have any mail opened by Council Staff (Please use form attached - Appendix One). Unopened mail will be delivered via the Thursday's courier run.

Thursday's Courier Run

Elected Members will receive their normal Thursday courier run. Any incoming Australia post mail that has no 'corporate value' and not required for registration will be date stamped and sent to Elected Members via the Thursday Courier run.

Mayor's Correspondence

All Incoming mail received by Records for the Mayor is opened and if it is of council business will be scanned & registered by Records. Records will task the PA an electronic copy of the document via [REDACTED] and will keep the original hard copy. The PA will provide the Mayor with a printed copy of the document. Records will also task these items to the staff member who routinely deal with the matter, for action or information.

Elected Members Correspondence

All incoming mail received by Records for the Elected Members who wish to have their mail opened and is of council business will be scanned and registered. Mail that relates to operational Council matters will be tasked to the staff member who routinely deals with the matter, for action or information. An electronic copy of the document will be forwarded via email or fax to the Elected Member for their information and/or response.

Incoming email received at the corporate email address

Emails received at Council's corporate email address [REDACTED] will be received by Records, assessed for corporate value and, if necessary, registered then tasked to the staff member who routinely deals with the matter, for action or information and/or forwarded to the Elected Member.

Marked “Private”, “Confidential” or “Personal”

The record keeping obligations imposed on Councils under the State Records Act 1997 place a positive obligation on Councils to implement mail receipt and recording processes in order to capture and store "official records" (a record made or received in the conduct of Council business). To meet this obligation, paper-based mail received by Records that is marked "confidential" or "private" will be opened and if 'corporate business' scanned and registered and tasked to staff and sent via email to the elected member. Any marked "Personal" will be forwarded unopened to the addressee.

Documents Received by Elected Members**Written Communication****Mail**

Any incoming mail that the Elected Member receives either by Australia Post or handed to by person that has 'corporate value' (please refer to 'Which documents do not need to be sent to the Records Department for registering', page 8) can be faxed directly to Records and/or handed to Governance staff at Council meeting's to deliver to Records staff for registration.

Email/Fax

It's important that Elected Members consider their incoming and outgoing email and faxes for corporate value and forward them via email/fax on to Records for registration as soon as practicable. Any attachments should be forwarded to Records along with the email. If outgoing email is sent to council staff, the staff member is responsible for registering the email.

Verbal Communications

Elected members may have telephone or other face-to-face conversations at any time on a variety of matters.

Conversations that are very basic or routine in nature, such as the issuing or receiving of basic instructions or information **do not** need to be documented.

Conversations that involve matters of significance to the conduct of Council business should be recorded (eg. Requires a response or action by Council). The appropriate form of recording of this information is to:

- Send an email, letter or fax to the appropriate officer of Council for action (the Council officer is responsible for registering this information)
- Emailing or phoning Council to initiate a Customer Request (the Customer Request is the documented proof of your conversation).

APPENDIX 2

**Permission Advice for opening and processing
Incoming Mail addressed to
Elected Members
and received at the City of Playford**

I, Elected Member

Please ✓ box.

give permission

do not give permission

For the Knowledge Services Centre to open and process incoming mail that is addressed to me and sent to City of Playford.

Signature

Date