RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Number: BSC-008	**Version:** 1
Classification: Statutory	**Section:** Corporate Services
Date Adopted by Council: 18 September 2024	**Resolution Number:** M2024.09.011
Next review Due: September 2026	**Responsible Officer:** Director of Corporate Services
Last Reviewed:	**Review: Note:** This Policy is reviewed when any of the following occur: 1. The related information is amended or replaced. 2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Chief Executive Officer. Notwithstanding the above, this Policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than two years.
Legislation: *Local Government Act 2009, Local Government Regulation 2012*	

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a foundation for records management within the Barcoo Shire Council (Council) ensuring records are managed in accordance with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, including the Queensland Public Records Act 2002;
- Set the standards and outline best practices for recordkeeping within Council, enabling public records and the corporate memory to be maintained in accordance with the Queensland Public Records Act 2002; and
- Provide guidance and direction on the creation and management of records ensuring practices meet business needs, accountability and stakeholder expectations.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Records Management Framework and Records Management Procedure.

Scope

This Records Management policy applies to all council employees and elected members.

This policy applies to public records created, commissioned or received by Council, and records that are Council's legislative responsibility. Council records may be created or received by Council or created automatically by a system or processes.

Examples of different types of records can be found in Section - Definitions under the definition of a Record.

This policy applies to records in all formats, regardless of the technology used to create or capture them or where they are located (e.g. business systems, mobile devices). Examples of different formats can be found in Section - Definitions under the definition of a Record.

Information that does not record work activities, such as personal emails and messages, external publications and external training material is not a Council record.

This policy applies to the Mayor and Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and all other Council employees including contractors, volunteers and those who create and maintain records on Council's behalf.

Responsibility

The CEO is responsible for ensuring Council makes and keeps full and accurate records of its business activities and is the delegated officer to approve disposal of public records under the Public Records Act 2002.

Records Management is a function within the Corporate and Community Services Directorate. The Director Corporate and Community Services is responsible for overseeing all matters relating to records management within Council.

Directors, Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders are responsible for:

Ensuring employees under their supervision are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities and undertake training to ensure records are created and managed appropriately.

- Ensuring that their business area captures records in an appropriate application; and
- Ensuring that their business area complies with this policy.

The Records Department is responsible for:

- Managing recordkeeping activities to ensure compliance with legislative and best practice requirements;
- Developing and implementing a recordkeeping program for Council, including the development of a recordkeeping framework and a disposal program;
- Developing and implementing recordkeeping training and awareness programs: and
- Undertaking disaster preparedness to ensure identification and management of vital records. All

employees are responsible for:

- Creating records of their business activities;
- Capturing records in an appropriate application;
- Ensuring records are kept for the required retention period in accordance with an authorised Retention and Disposal Schedule;
- Securing records from unauthorised access; and
- Complying with this policy.

Definitions

Council employee, for the purposes of this policy is:

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- A senior executive such as Director who reports directly to the CEO;
- Staff appointed by the CEO under section 196(3) of the Local Government Act 2009;
- A permanent, temporary, casual or part-time employee such as a Manager, Supervisor, Team Leader, Team Member or individual;
- A contractor, consultant, agency casual, contingent worker; or
- A Council volunteer.

Elected members mean the mayor and all Councillors of Barcoo Shire Council

Record means recorded information created or received by Council or created on behalf of Council as part of everyday business processes that relate to the administration of Council business and which documents a decision, action taken, or any recommendations, advice or instructions given.

Examples of records include, but are not limited to:

- Policies/procedures;
- File notes;
- Meeting minutes;
- Plans or drawings;
- Business cases;
- Finance approvals;
- Online transactions and communications;
- Recruitment and selection documentation;
- Approved CAD drawings;
- Internal/external advice;
- Consultation reports, feedback requests, and public enquiries;
- Invoices for payment;
- Interactions - rights and entitlements of individuals and communities;
- Research - reports and data;
- Drafts - at key milestones (e.g. consultation, approval) that show change in direction, significant; feedback or comments; and
- Legal agreements.

Records include anything on which there is writing; anything on which there are marks, figures, symbols or perforations having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them; anything from which sounds, images or writings can be reproduced; or maps, plans, drawings or photographs.

Records can be in any format, regardless of the technology used to create or capture them or where they are located (e.g. business systems, mobile devices). Examples of formats for records include, but are not limited to:

- Emails;
- Text messages;
- Social media;
- Websites and web content;
- Video and audio recordings;
- Spreadsheets;
- Significant drafts;
- Surveillance records;
- Metadata;
- Shared drives;
- Mobile devices and storage;
- Cloud storage and services; and
- Business applications/systems including client management databases and infrastructure maintenance systems etc. (e.g. audit logs, data files, system change requests).

Policy

The Queensland Public Records Act 2002 requires public authorities to make and keep complete and reliable public records as part of any business decision made or any business activity undertaken. The Council is committed to meeting its recordkeeping obligations and will implement appropriate strategies, processes, applications and tools to ensure the creation, maintenance and protection of accurate and reliable records.

In accordance with this policy and the Records Management Procedure, these records are required to be saved into Council's corporate Records Management System or other approved business systems and applications.

All employees, Councillors and contractors must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the records and information that are captured are relevant, complete, meaningful and accurate.

Failure to keep proper records poses a risk to Council and can lead to:

- Loss of time and resources;
- Breaches of confidentiality;
- Reputational damage;
- Legal action;
- Loss of valuable information;
- Compromised accountability and transparency;
- Corruption or fraud; or
- Loss of the irreplaceable heritage of our shire.

Council has legal obligations in relation to its records and records management practices. Council records are themselves subject to legislation, such as the Right to Information Act 2009, and legal processes such as discovery and subpoenas.

Council records may also be required by Royal Commissions, the Ombudsman, the Courts, auditors and other people or bodies.

Council is committed to adhering to the Queensland State Archives Records Governance Policy. The Policy sets out the foundational principles of recordkeeping for Queensland Government agencies and public authorities to meet minimum recordkeeping requirements now and into the future.

Council's Records Management Policy aims to ensure:

- Accountability and increased efficiency including reducing time spent finding records and enhancing information sharing within the agency (where possible);
- All employees are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities;
- Compliance with the:
    - *Public Records Act* 2002;
    - *Local Government Act 2009;*
    - *Right to Information Action* 2009; and

- *Information Privacy Act 2009.*

- Consistent application of the principles within the following policies and principles:

  - *Queensland State Archives (QSA) Records Governance Policy;*
  - *Information Security Policy (IS18: 2018); and*
  - *Metadata Management Principles.*

Records Governance Policy - Policy Requirements

Queensland State Archives' Records Governance Policy contains six policy requirements to assist Queensland Government authorities to fulfill their records management obligations.

To be compliant with the Public Records Act 2002, Council must:

- Ensure records management is supported at all levels of the organisation;
- Systematically manage records using governance practices that are integrated and consistent with broader organisational frameworks;
- Create complete and reliable records;
- Actively manage permanent, high-value and high-risk records and information as a priority;
- Make records discoverable and accessible for use and re-use; and
- Dispose of records in a planned and authorised way.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

Records Management Procedures;
Right to Information Policy; and
Right to Information Procedure

RELATED LEGISLATION
Public Records Act 2002;
Records Governance Policy;
Records Governance Implementation Guideline;
Human Rights Act 2019;
Information Privacy Act 2009;
Right to Information Act 2009;
Local Government Act 2009;
Local Government Regulation 2012;
Electronic Transactions Act 2001;
Evidence Act 1977; and
Judicial Review Act 1991.

REVIEW
The Chief Executive Officer may without referral to Council, review and make amendments of a minor administrative nature that do not affect the intent of the policy, e.g., change of legislation, change of personnel responsibilities, repair drafting error.