

Information and Records Management Policy

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1.42	27 September 2006	Records Management Policy Resolution 10523
1.43	27 September 2006	Records Management Policy and Procedures for Councillors Resolution 10523
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Further Document Information and Relationships	
Related Legislation	State Records Act 1998 State Records Regulation 2015 Evidence Act 1995 Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 Public Finance and Audit Act 1983
Related Policies	Business Continuity Management Plan Privacy Policy
Related Documents	NSW State Records Standard: No. 11 – Physical storage of state records NSW State Records Standard: No. 12 – Standard on records management Privacy Management Plan State Records NSW - Local government records (GA39)

**Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.*

Contents

1	Objective	4
2	Scope	4
3	Policy Statement.....	4
4	Roles and Responsibilities	5
5	Creation and Capture of Records	6
6	Access to Council Records	6
6.1	Public Access	6
6.2	Staff Access.....	6
6.3	Requests for Council Information.....	7
6.4	Requests for access to your Personal Information	7
7	Storage, Protection and Security	7
8	Archiving, Disposal and Destruction.....	8
8.1	Appraisal and Transfer.....	8
8.2	Disposal	9
8.3	Retention	9
9	Risk Management	9
10	Compliance	9

1 Objective

The purpose of the Information and Records Management Policy is to:

- a. Ensure that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of Liverpool Plains Shire Council (Council) are created, managed and retained or disposed of appropriately and in accordance with relevant legislation.
- b. Enable Council to achieve information accessibility, business enhancement and improvement,
- c. Provide for Council to meet its obligations for accountability while ensuring that it protects the rights and interests of Council, its staff, customers and the community.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all Liverpool Plains Shire Council operations and covers activities undertaken by councillors, staff, consultants, volunteers and contractors when discharging functions of Council. All staff, consultants, volunteers and contractors of Council must comply with this document in their conduct of official business of Council.

This Policy applies to information and records in all formats, including electronic records.

3 Policy Statement

Liverpool Plains Shire Council (Council) is committed to meeting its responsibilities under the *NSW State Records Act 1998* and to implementing best practice in its information management practices and procedures. The State Records Act requires public offices to 'make and keep full and accurate records' of their business activities.

The requirement for Council to maintain a Records Management Program stems from the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*, Section 12(2) which stipulates that Council must establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice from time to time approved by the State Records Authority. Also included in the Act, is the monitoring power to require Council to investigate recordkeeping practices when instructed.

Records are a corporate asset, forming the corporate memory. They support accountability of the organisation by providing evidence of actions and decisions and are a vital asset providing support of our daily functions and operations. They support decision-making, policy formulation and protect the interests of Council.

Other legal obligations relating to records management and provision of records arise from the Acts, Regulations and standards listed in the Document Information section of this Policy.

Council is committed to a culture of best-practice records and information management, compliant with the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and underpinned by the principles in *AS ISO 15489.1: 2017 Information and documentation - Records management, Part 1: Concepts and principles*, throughout the information lifecycle.

Records and information are captured, managed and used in the most efficient and appropriate format, with a preference for the creation and maintenance of digital only records wherever possible. Information is not unnecessarily duplicated, and the creation, storage and management of irrelevant, unnecessary or ephemeral information are kept to a minimum.

Personal information is collected lawfully and fairly, and is safeguarded from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, modification or loss in accordance with the

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP Act) and the Council's Information Security Management System.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Council is responsible for the protection, custody and return of all State Records.

General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring that Liverpool Plains Shire Council complies with the regulations and requirements of the State Records Act and leading staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with this Policy.

Director Corporate Performance and CFO

- Is the nominated Senior Responsible Officer for the oversight of Council's records and information management and has ownership of this Policy;
- Is responsible for reporting to the State Records Authority on Council's Records Management Program; and
- Has responsibility to ensure Council's records management methods and recording systems are reviewed at appropriate intervals to ensure their continuing suitability and effectiveness.

Records Manager

Responsibilities include:

- Ensure compliance with all Acts and Standards relating to recordkeeping within Local Government;
- Approve all system changes, including changes to Security Groups, Content Manager User Permissions, destruction of records and creation of retention schedules.
- Ensure compliance with Council's Information and Records Management Policy and Procedures;

Supervisors/Managers

Responsibilities include:

- To ensure that records are created and managed within their area of supervision in a way that complies with Council's Information and Records Management Policy and Procedures;
- To advise the Council's Records staff on statutory and regulatory requirements for records relating to their specific activities;
- To ensure that contracts with service providers contain records management clauses in accordance with this Policy;
- To ensure staff within their area is aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities and trained in Council's Records Management System (Content Manager) and other applicable business systems; and
- To ensure recordkeeping is part of exit procedures.

Records Staff

Responsibilities include:

- To ensure that records are created and managed by the Records Department in a way which complies with this Policy, State Records NSW - Local government records (GA39) and Council's Records Management Program;

- To maintain a central register of all Council's critical document and record retention systems;
- To make recommendations for improvement or modification of practices relating to Council's records and information;
- To establish and maintain standard operating procedures in support of Council's Records Management Program, including the development and maintenance of a standard Naming Convention for all Council records; and
- To provide assistance and guidance to Council staff in relation to their recordkeeping responsibilities.

All Staff

Responsibilities include:

- To comply with Council's adopted Information and Records Management Policy, and Procedures;
- To create full and accurate records of their business activities;
- To ensure that all records are suitably saved into Council's approved recordkeeping systems;
- To ensure all records are handled with care;
- To not destroy records without authority; and
- To protect sensitive records from unauthorised access.

5 Creation and Capture of Records

All staff, councillors, contractors and volunteers are responsible for ensuring records of business activities they undertake are created and captured in Council's approved record keeping system.

6 Access to Council Records

6.1 Public Access

Liverpool Plains Shire Council makes information available to the public in line with NSW Government requirements.

The NSW Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) Section 6 states:

1. An agency must make the government information that is its "open access information" publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.
2. Open access information is to be made publicly available free of charge on a website maintained by the agency (unless to do so would impose unreasonable additional costs on the agency) and can be made publicly available in any other way the agency considers appropriate. e

The types of Council information defined as Open access Information is set out in Section 18 of the GIPA Act and Section 1 of the Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009 (GIPA Regulation).

6.2 Staff Access

Access to Council records is made in accordance with relevant legislation and Council's Code of Conduct. Staff will be granted access to Council's Records Management System (Content Manager) in accordance with their role and responsibility.

Only staff with delegate authority can release Council records.

6.3 Requests for Council Information

Members of the public are permitted to request access to Council's records.

Access to information that is not Public Access Information is available to staff and members of the public in two (2) ways:

Informal Access Request - Access to information which is not available as Mandatory Release or Authorised Proactive Release information may be provided through Informal Release. In this regard, applications should be made to Council by submitting the appropriate 'Informal Access to Information' application form. Council will endeavour to release information in response to such a request, subject to any reasonable conditions as Council deems fit to impose.

Formal access requests - Notwithstanding the lodgement of an information application, Council may require a formal access application to be submitted where the information sought:

- Is of a sensitive nature that requires careful weighing of the considerations in favour of and against disclosure; or
- Contains personal or confidential information about a third party that requires consultation; or
- Would involve an unreasonable amount of time and resource to produce.

To make a formal request for information, a 'Formal Access Information' application form should be completed. In accordance with the GIPA Act, an application fee of \$30.00 is payable, and additional processing charges may be applicable. An acknowledgement of such application will be provided by Council within five working days.

6.4 Requests for access to your Personal Information

Members of the public can request access to personal information that Council holds about them using either the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP Act) or the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act).

All requests must be in writing to Council using the Informal Access Request form or Formal Access Request form.

7 Storage, Protection and Security

All records should be stored appropriately to allow for their retrieval, use and preservation.

In doing so, the security, privacy and confidentiality of records should be maintained.

The following security groups are established in Content Manager, with access to each security group restricted to the identified members:

Group	Members
System Administration	Coordinator Risk Management Manager Corporate Governance Records Officer
General Manager Confidential	General Manager Coordinator Executive Services Executive Services Officer

Executive Leadership Team Confidential	General Manager Director Corporate Performance and CFO Director Planning and Recreation Director Infrastructure and Utilities Executive Services Officer
Leadership Team Confidential	General Manager Director Corporate Performance and CFO Director Planning and Recreation Director Infrastructure and Utilities Manager Property and Recreation Manager Operations Manager Corporate Governance Manager Customer & Information Services Manager Human Resources Manager Planning and Regulation Manager Water Services Manager Engineering, Assets and Projects Manager Finance Executive Services Officer
Human Resources Confidential	General Manager Manager Human Resources Human Resources Officers Payroll Officer
Public Officer Confidential	General Manager Director Corporate Performance and CFO Manager Corporate Governance
Payroll Confidential	Management Accountant Payroll Officer
Internal Audit Confidential	General Manager Director Corporate Performance and CFO Manager Corporate Governance Coordinator Risk Management
Unrestricted	All Users are staff that require access to review and upload documents into the Records Management System.

8 Archiving, Disposal and Destruction

All records must be protected, maintained and accessible for their entire retention period as outlined in the General Disposal Authority No. 39 for Local Government Records (GA39) under the *State Records Act 1998*.

Records cannot be disposed of without the approval of the Manager Customer and Information Services.

8.1 Appraisal and Transfer

Records are to be appraised prior to individual business units boxing/archiving the records to ensure compliance with the retention and disposal schedule. Once the

records are boxed, both the boxes and a list of the contents against each box are to be provided to the Records Officer for indexing, registration and archiving.

8.2 Disposal

Original and source records will be stored and maintained by the Records Officer in day boxes for a period of six (6) months, which complies with General Retention and Disposal Authority No. 45 for Original or Source Records (GA45).

8.3 Retention

All records required to be maintained on a permanent basis as per their retention schedule will be stored in a secure environment.

Documents and metadata of documents must be maintained electronically on servers. Backups of the server are taken on a regular basis.

9 Risk Management

Poor management of Council's records and information has the potential to cause substantial problems for the organisation, such as economic or financial losses, exposure to litigation, injuries, delays, reputational damage and customer dissatisfaction.

Council recognises that its records and information needs to be managed like any other asset and aims to mitigate recordkeeping risks through:

- a. The implementation of sound internal controls for the capture, registration, identification, storage, security and disposal of all records to ensure the integrity of records and information, particularly the preservation of key corporate information. This in turn provides protection and support in litigation including the management of risks associated with the existence of, or lack of, evidence of organisational activity.
- b. Managing the publication, use, privacy and protection of records. Council acknowledges that it is vital to ensure that security standards are sufficient to guarantee that exposure or unauthorised use does not take place.
- c. Governance and management oversight, but also ensuring that recordkeeping responsibilities are allocated clearly and that all staff know what they are expected to do and how they should contribute their records to the shared corporate pool. A degree of human error is inevitable but a culture of accountability is an important safeguard for Council, against risk.

10 Compliance

All Council staff are expected to read this Policy carefully so as to ensure that they are well aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities and processes to which they are to conform.

Any breaches of this Policy will be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action. Non-compliance with this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken.