

# RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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**Council Policy**

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POLICY OWNER:  
**Director Corporate Services**

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POLICY REFERENCE:  
**CNCL\_POL\_ECM8788823**



## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1.** Records are key assets in informing work undertaken by North Sydney Council, supporting effective decision making and enabling more efficient service delivery. Council has a range of requirements relating to the effective management of its records and information, including legislative, business, and community requirements.

While there are often recordkeeping requirements under broader legislation that Council is required to adhere to, the core source of legislative recordkeeping requirements is the *State Records Act 1998*. Under the *State Records Act 1998* Council is required to:

- a) make and keep records that fully and accurately document their operations and administration;
- b) establish and maintain a records management program in conformity with standards and codes of best practice approved by NSW State Archives and Records;
- c) ensure that records are stored in conditions appropriate to their format and preservation requirements, and
- d) ensure that records held in digital or other technology dependent formats are accessible for as long as they required.

- 1.2.** The Policy seeks to enable and ensure effective management of Council's record information assets by:

- a) detailing principles for creation, capture and management of records as information assets, including associated requirements or activities; and
- b) clearly articulating roles and responsibilities for creation, capture and management of records as information assets.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1.** This policy applies to all Councillors, committee members, employees, and others acting on behalf of Council, including contractors and volunteers.

- 2.2.** This policy applies to all record information assets created, received, or maintained by Council.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>3.1</b> Access	Right, opportunity, means of finding, using, or retrieving information.
<b>3.2</b> Business System	Organised collection of hardware, software, supplies, policies, procedures, and people, which stores, processes, and provides access to an organisation's business information assets. See also 3.6 Electronic Document and

	Records Management System (EDRMS), below.
<b>3.3 Capture</b>	A deliberate action which results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. Capture involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) assigning a unique identifier (either machine generated and readable, or human readable);</li> <li>b) capture or generation of metadata about the record at the point of capture; and</li> <li>c) creation of relationships between the records, agents or business.</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 Disposal</b>	Range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments.
<b>3.5 Disposal Authority</b>	Documents authorised by the Board of the State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales that set out appropriate retention periods for classes of records.
<b>3.6 Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)</b>	An automated software application designed to facilitate the creation, management, use, storage, and disposal of a range of both physical and digital documents and records. Essentially it manages unstructured records and information. An EDRMS may also automate business processes such as workflows and approvals and be integrated with other business systems. Council's EDRMS is ECM.
<b>3.7 Evidence</b>	Proof of a business transaction. Not limited to the legal sense of the term.
<b>3.8 Information Assets</b>	Information, records, and data created, sent, received, and maintained by Council as evidence of business transactions and in pursuance of legal obligations.
<b>3.9 Metadata</b>	Structured or semi-structured information which describes information assets and enables the creation, management and use of information assets through time and within and across domains.
<b>3.10 Record</b>	See Information Assets (3.8)
<b>3.11 Records Management</b>	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.
<b>3.12 Retention</b>	Keeping information assets in line with Records Authorities for defined periods of time.
<b>3.13 Senior Responsible Officer</b>	
<b>3.14 Sentencing</b>	The process of identifying and classifying records according to a retention and disposal authority and applying the disposal action specified in it.

## 4. PROVISIONS

- 4.1.** The creation, capture and management of Council records and information is guided by the principles described in sections 4.2 to 4.5.
- 4.2.** Principle 1: Complete and accurate records and information are created and/or received as evidence of Council business.
- a) Records and information needed to meet or support business and recordkeeping requirements, including accountability and community expectations, are identified.
  - b) Full and accurate records and information are routinely and consistently created and /or received and captured in line with relevant internal Policy, guidelines, and procedures.
  - c) Records and information are captured into Council's EDRMS or other approved business systems as evidence of Council activities.
  - d) Staff are made aware of their records and information management responsibilities and are provided support in carrying out their responsibilities.
  - e) Records and information management activities are monitored and reviewed to ensure they are consistent with recordkeeping requirements.
- 4.3.** Principle 2: Records and information are valued as a trusted and reliable organisational asset.
- a) Records and information are identified as key organisational assets in relevant internal policy, guidelines and procedures which are consistent with legislative and business requirements.
  - b) Policies, guidelines, and procedures relating to the creation, capture, and management of records are regularly reviewed and updated as required and made available to staff.
  - c) Requirements for managing records and information are clearly identified, and appropriate resourcing provided to support their efficient and effective management across all environments (including systems and physical repositories).
  - d) Records and information accurately reflect the business activities they provide evidence of.
  - e) High-risk and high-value records are identified and appropriate governance controls applied to ensure they are protected over time.
  - f) Risks to records and information are identified, and appropriate action taken to mitigate or remediate risks.
- 4.4.** Principle 3: Records and information are effectively and securely managed over time.
- a) Governance controls are implemented in Council's EDRMS and other approved business systems to ensure records and information are protected across environments.
  - b) Systems are tested or audited to ensure that systems are operating routinely and that there are no issues affecting records and information integrity, useability or accessibility.
  - c) Records and information are protected against internal and external threats, unauthorised access, use, modification, deletion, alteration, or disclosure.

- d) Internal access to records and information is role-based, with appropriate controls put in place to safeguard and protect sensitive records and information.
- e) External access to records and information is governed by the *Access to Information Policy*.
- f) Records and information are stored securely, where possible, in sustainable and interoperable file formats.
- g) Records and information are sustained over time through technology changes and are migrated as required to support ongoing access and use (including decommissioning of systems). Long-term records and information are identified and appropriate strategies put in place to support physical and digital preservation.
- h) Records and information are sentenced and retained in line with relevant NSW State Records and Archives Authority disposal authority instruments and are routinely and defensibly destroyed or transferred when appropriate.
- i) Where records and information are located in outsourced storage, such as cloud platforms, appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure records and information are appropriately protected and remain accessible to Council.

**4.5. Principle 4: Information assets are used and reused to support efficient operations and enable effective service delivery.**

- a) Records and information are assigned relevant and accurate metadata to support their discovery, use and reuse.
- b) Records and information are used to support planning, decision making, resource allocation, reporting, communications, and business activities.
- c) Records and information are made available and shared responsibly internally to derive maximum value.

## 5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBLE	ACCOUNTABLE
<b>5.1 Senior Responsible Officer</b>	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) role, fulfilled by the Chief Information Officer, is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring this Policy is routinely reviewed and updated as required.</li> <li>b) ensuring that procedures, guidelines and training supporting this Policy are regularly reviewed and updated as required.</li> <li>c) ensuring that appropriate records management strategies are developed, reviewed and implemented.</li> <li>d) overseeing records and information management activities.</li> <li>e) ensuring that staff with appropriate records and information management skills are available to support implementation of strategic and operational records and information management activities.</li> <li>f) ensuring all staff receive training appropriate to their position on records and information management responsibilities and EDRMS use.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) carry out or support liaison with internal stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvements in records and information management practices.</li> <li>h) supporting identification and mitigation or remediation of risks to records as information assets.</li> <li>i) overseeing monitoring and review of records and information management activities, and compliance with this Policy and legislative recordkeeping requirements.</li> <li>j) overseeing and authorising disposal of Council records.</li> <li>k) reporting on records and information management activities as required.</li> </ul>
<b>5.2 Mayor and Councillors</b>	Endorse the Policy and ensure that Council's Governance Informing Strategy align with the Policy.
<b>5.3 Chief Executive Officer</b>	Council has delegated the Chief Executive Officer the authority to exercise the responsibilities detailed in this Policy.
<b>5.4 Executive Leadership Team</b>	<p>The Executive Leadership Team are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring compliance with requirements of the <i>State Records Act 1998</i>, and associated regulations and standards, per Chief Executive responsibilities outlined in Section 10 of the Act.</li> <li>b) championing and providing sufficient strategic direction and support for governance of records as information assets.</li> <li>c) ensuring sufficient resourcing is available to support effective governance of records as information assets.</li> <li>d) supporting identification and mitigation or remediation of risks to records as information assets.</li> <li>e) promoting and supporting a positive records and information management culture.</li> </ul>
<b>5.5 Procurement Team</b>	<p>The Procurement team is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring that proposed new systems, cloud platforms or other arrangements for outsourced storage of Council records are assessed against records and information management requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>5.6 Information Management Team</b>	<p>The Information Management Team is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) providing strategic and operational support for records and information management activities.</li> <li>b) providing operational support for Council's EDRMS, including identification of appropriate access to records.</li> <li>c) contributing to development and review of records and information management Policy, procedures, guidelines, and training.</li> <li>d) delivering records and information management training, including training related to use of Council's EDRMS.</li> <li>e) liaising with internal stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvements in records and information management practices.</li> <li>f) carrying out, or providing support for, sentencing and</li> </ul>

	<p>disposal of Council records in line with approved disposal authorities.</p> <p>g) monitoring adherence to this Policy and supporting guidelines and procedures.</p> <p>h) monitoring and contributing to reporting on Council adherence with legislative recordkeeping obligations.</p> <p>i) contributing to a positive records and information management culture and building awareness of records and information management responsibilities.</p>
<b>5.7 Information Technology Department</b>	<p>The Information Technology Department is responsible for:</p> <p>a) providing technical support and implementing technical governance controls to protect Council records, include access controls.</p> <p>b) providing technical support for migration of records and information between systems and file formats, and other digital preservation activities.</p>
<b>5.8 Managers and Supervisors</b>	<p>Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:</p> <p>a) modelling good records and information management practices.</p> <p>b) fostering a team culture that supports effective creation, use and management of records and information.</p> <p>c) ensuring good records and information management practices are built into business processes.</p> <p>d) supporting staff in understanding and adhering to their responsibilities as outlined in this Policy and related guidelines and procedures.</p> <p>e) considering records and information management risks when carrying out decision making and service delivery.</p>
<b>5.9 Information Asset or System Owners</b>	<p>Information Asset or System Owners are responsible for:</p> <p>a) liaising with Information Technology and Information Management to gain advice or support for effective management of records and information.</p> <p>b) ensuring owned records are not disposed of without authorisation.</p> <p>c) ensuring owned systems are configured to meet, where possible, recordkeeping requirements.</p>
<b>5.5 Employees</b>	<p>Employees must adhere to the requirements of this Policy and operate within its authorities.</p>

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENT	LOCATION
<b>6.1</b> Access to Information Policy	<a href="#">As published on Council's website</a>
<b>6.2</b> Data Breach Policy	<a href="#">As published on Council's website</a>
<b>6.3</b> Enterprise Risk Management Policy	<a href="#">As published on Council's website</a>
<b>6.4</b> Privacy Management Plan	<a href="#">As published on Council's website</a>

## 7. RELATED LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

LEGISLATION/GUIDANCE	NOTES
<b>7.1</b> State Records Act 1998	The Act governs the creation, management, storage, access, and disposal of government records.
<b>7.2</b> State Records Regulation 2015	The Regulation is a subordinate piece of legislation made under the State Records Act 1998. While the Act sets out the overarching legal framework for managing government records in New South Wales, the Regulation 2015 provides more specific, practical details that support the implementation of the Act's requirements.

## 8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Review Date
1	6 October 2021	General Manager	MANEX	2021/22
2	25 February 2024	CEO	ELT	2028/29