Policy A.13
Record Keeping Policy

OBJECTIVE

To ensure all formats of records are captured and controlled in accordance with relevant legislation, standards, principles and procedures. The outcome is accurate and accessible records with continuing administration, legal and historical value.

STATEMENT

Means of implementation:

The Records Management function will investigate, recommend and implement the most suitable and affordable technology to provide an efficient, modern and effective means of recording, accessing, storing, reporting and disposing of business information. Software should effectively manage all records of the Shire in all forms, provide for Electronic Document Management and Workflow and the seamless integration of information for enquiry purposes.

Its actions are intended to achieve the following:

- To improve the availability of, and access to, information across the Shire and provide reliable and efficient retrieval of records (both physical and electronic).
- To train staff in the creation, access and preservation of full and accurate business records.

To support these principles:

- An integrated paper and electronic system which is based on a reducing level of paper records and an increasing level of electronic records.
- A devolved level of responsibility to all staff to generate accurate and usable business records and to ensure they carry out necessary records management responsibilities in managing records they create.
- Document management being carried out at every personal computer.
- The concept of a single copy being enforced.
- The concept of the single entry of data being applied.
- Information being accessible to all staff, simultaneously and at all times (security considerations considered).
- Information being readily available which shows the current status of outstanding correspondence and identifies what action is being taken and by whom.
- The provision of automated and one-off recording of electronic documents regardless of format.
- Comprehensive reporting facilities being available to Management.

STRATEGIES

1. Staff Obligations

1.1 Staff must make and create records to support accountability and corporate memory. Records provide evidence of business activities. Staff are required to comply with the following to keep full and accurate records:

a) To create records which reflect the Shire's business activities.
b) To make records which would not otherwise be made, such as details of important meetings, telephone discussions, conferences and oral statements which document the reason, explanation or justification for their decisions. These should be properly prepared, typed or neatly handwritten and clearly identify the author, or recorded electronically when suitable facilities are available.
c) To keep records on official files, not in private record keeping systems.
d) To learn how and where records are kept within Shire.
e) Not to destroy records without authorisation.
f) To register documents created by officers using the register to records macro of IT Vision's Synergy Soft Electronic Document Management Systems.

2. Registration of correspondence

All formats of incoming correspondence to Shire of Boyup Brook, which requires an action or is relevant information, is to be registered using Synergysoft's Registry. The Records Management System should be capable of this function and be based on the concepts of a single copy and the single entry of data.

Any request for a service or a complaint regarding a provision of a service (where Shire is to provide an action) is to be registered into Synergysoft's Customer Service Request module.

Ephemeral type records do not require registration on either system.

3. Access to Council Records

3.1 The access conditions set out below shall be adhered to:
a) Use of original records will be limited.
b) If copies are made it will be stamped with copy to identify the correspondence.
c) Information of a confidential nature will have security levels applied to them to limit the access of staff.
d) The Public will not be permitted access to the Corporate Information Management storage areas and staff work areas.
e) Original material must be viewed in a suitably defined area, and is not to be removed by the Public for any purpose. If a record has been copied onto another format (eg. microfilm/fiche, aperture card, photocopy, digital image etc.) the copy is to be issued in preference to the original record.
f) Some records may be restricted to protect the privacy of individuals or because they are fragile and require conservation.
3.2 In respect of staff personnel files, the following persons have access:
Chief Executive Officer, Manager of Finance, Manager of Works & Services and the Finance Officer (in the capacity of maintaining and retrieving the files),
3.3 No record of Boyup Brook Shire is to be removed or temporarily removed by any Staff Member without having first obtained the consent of the Records Officer or Chief Executive Officer (refer to procedures manual).

4. Storage and Security

All Boyup Brook Shire records are to be appropriately stored to ensure their future retrieval and use until they are archived. In doing so, the security, privacy and confidentiality of all records is to be protected.

4.1 All Shire records are to be maintained in appropriately secure storage. Paper-based records are to be housed in secure storage areas.

4.2 User access to shared electronic directories (folders) is to be controlled to prevent unauthorised creation, modification, or deletion of electronic files and/or directories (folders).

4.3 Unauthorised alteration, removal, distribution, duplication, or destruction of Shire records is prohibited.

4.4 Confidentiality of information must be adhered to at all times, and access to particularly sensitive material controlled and recorded.

4.5 Personnel files or commercial contracts are to be locked and not left in areas accessible to unauthorised personnel or persons.

4.6 All electronic records must be backed up systematically at appropriate intervals.

4.7 Measures are to be taken to prevent the loss of records in the event of a disaster including processes such as imaging, microfilming, off-site storage, fireproof containment and disaster planning.

5. Archive Management and Disposal

5.1 Shire will preserve records created or received by it in the course of its daily business and which are deemed to have permanent or semi-permanent value.

5.2 Records no longer required for general use in the Shire, and regarded as having permanent value, will be transferred to secondary storage.

5.3 Records suitable for destruction should be destroyed rather than being retained indefinitely. Files no longer required should be deleted from indexing systems, however, an historical record of file index details is to be maintained permanently.

5.4 the Shire will endeavour to ensure that all records of permanent value are maintained in the best possible condition.

5.5 The Local Government Act, the State Records Act and the General Records Disposal Authority for Local Government Records are to be used for the retention and disposal of Shire records.

5.6 A disposal register is to be completed for each series of items to be destroyed.

5.7 Where records concerned are not covered by the approved disposal schedule or identified in the Act, the Records Officers shall exercise due caution, paying regard to the records disposal guidelines issued by the Department of Local Government.

6. Preservation and Conservation

6.1 The Corporate Records and Archives Manager will ensure that Shire 's records are preserved for posterity as required.

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