

Records Management Policy



Town of Cottesloe

1. Policy Statement

Records are recognised as an important information resource for the Town of Cottesloe, and it is accepted that sound records management practices will contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Town. Due to legislative requirements, the Town of Cottesloe is obliged to maintain a records management system that completely, accurately and reliably creates and maintains evidential records, and to dispose of those records only through an approved scheme.

This policy applies to all external and internal records, which are handled, received or generated by the Town, regardless of their physical format or media type.

2. Definitions

'Ephemeral Records'	Ephemeral records are duplicated records and/or those that have only short term value to the Town of Cottesloe, with little or no on-going administrative, fiscal, legal, evidential or historical value. They may include insignificant drafts and rough notes, records or routine enquires.
'General Disposal Authority'	The General Disposal Authority for Local Government records is designed to provide consistency throughout Local Government in disposal activities and decisions. It is a continuing authority for the disposal and archival of records which document a Local Government's operations.
'Government Record'	A record created or received by a government organisation or a government organisation employee in the course of their work for the organisation.
'Record'	Recorded information in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business and kept as evidence of such activity.
'Recordkeeping Plan'	The Recordkeeping Plan ensures that records are created, managed and maintained over time and disposed of in accordance with principles and standards issued by the State Records Commission. It is the primary means of providing evidence of compliance with the State Records Act, and that best practices have been implemented in the organisation.
'Records Disposal'	Disposal is by way of depositing records in the State Archives, managing the records as designated by State Archives, or by destruction in accordance with policy.

'Significant Records'	Significant records contain information, which is of administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential or historical value, and are not recorded elsewhere on the public record. They describe an issue, record who was involved, why a decision was made, and may include actual guidelines.
'State Record'	A parliamentary or government record.
'Vital Records'	Vital records are essential to the continued business of the Town of Cottesloe. Vital Records include those that protect the rights of the individual and the organisation, and are absolutely essential for reconstruction in the event of a disaster.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the principles of the Town of Cottesloe's records management function and to document an orderly and efficient approach to the proper management of records. The policy incorporates applicable legislative requirements into standard Town of Cottesloe practices and details basic records management requirements.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff including permanent, temporary and part-time employees, contractors and Elected Members.

4.1 Legislative Requirements

The *State Records Act 2000* has specific provisions relating to the responsibility to create, manage and dispose of records in accordance with principles and standards issues by the State Records Commission.

In accordance with Section 19 of the *State Records Act 2000*, the Town of Cottesloe has a Recordkeeping Plan that has been approved by the State Records Commission.

Other legislation and standards impacting on records management includes but is not limited to the:

- *Evidence Act 1906*
- *Limitation Act 2005*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Local Government Act 1995*
- Australian Accounting Standards
- *Criminal Code 1913* (Section 85)
- *Electronic Transactions Act 2011*

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 Elected Members

All Elected Members are to create and maintain records relating to their role as a Councillor for the Town of Cottesloe in line with legislation and state policies and procedures for the management of records. Political and personal records of Elected Members are exempt.

Access to the Town's records by Elected Members will be via the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

4.2.2 Chief Executive Officer

In accordance with section 5.41 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Chief Executive Officer is to '*Ensure that records and documents of the local government are properly kept for the purpose of this Act and any other written law*'.

4.2.3 Managers

All managers are to ensure that there are records management processes established to manage the records under their control. They are also to ensure that all new staff are inducted as to their record keeping responsibilities.

4.2.4 All Staff

All staff (including contractors) are to create, collect and retain records relating to business activities they perform. They are to:

- Identify significant and ephemeral records, ensuring that the significant records are captured into the recordkeeping system, and that all records are handled in a manner compliant with legislation and the Town of Cottesloe's policies and procedures for recordkeeping.
- Ensure that only authorised disposal of records occur in accordance with the General Disposal Authority for Local Government.

4.2.5 Senior Records Officer

The Senior Records Officer is responsible for providing a records management service which complies with the Town of Cottesloe's records management policy and procedures, and the State Records Office requirements.

5. Policy Objectives

- a. Employees, consultants, contractors and Elected Members of the Town will create full and accurate records, in the appropriate format, of the Town's business decisions and transactions to meet all legislative, business, administrative, financial, evidential and historical requirements.

- b. All records created and received in the course of the Town’s business are to be captured at the point of creation, regardless of format, with required metadata, into appropriate recordkeeping and business systems that are managed in accordance with sound recordkeeping principles.
- c. All records are to be categorised as to their level of sensitivity and adequately secured and protected from violation, unauthorised access or destruction and kept in accordance with the necessary retrieval, preservation and storage requirements.
- d. Access to the Town’s records by employees and contractors will be in accordance with the designated access and security classifications. Access to the Town’s records by the public will be in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* and Council policy. Access to the Town's records by Elected Members will be via the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.
- e. All records kept by the Town will be disposed of in accordance with the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, produced by the State Records Office.
- f. All records, which are made or received by the Town or an individual staff member during the course of the Town’s business, are corporately owned by the Town of Cottesloe.
Therefore, are subject to the recordkeeping practices and procedures of the Town of Cottesloe.
- g. Registers are to be maintained of all records series and special categories, including by not limited to, registers of policies, assets, tenders and quotations, forms, vital records, files and contracts.
- h. Records are not to be removed from the Town of Cottesloe unless in accordance with the approved retention and disposal schedule, or in the custody of an officer performing official business.

Adopted	24 May 2004
Reviewed	23 August 2013
Expected date of review	