

Council Policy – Elected Member Recordkeeping

Responsible Directorate	Corporate Services
Responsible Business Unit/s	Governance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance
Affected Business Unit/s	Governance

Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide guidance to elected members regarding their record keeping responsibilities and establish appropriate practices to facilitate the ease of capture of elected member records.

Scope

This policy applies to all elected members of the Shire of Ashburton (the Shire).

Policy Statement

Elected members' records are important and necessary as they serve as a history of the transaction and business process of local government and member accountability functions arising from their participation in the decision-making processes of Council and committees.

Some local government records created and received by elected members have continuing value to the Shire and should be incorporated into the Shire's records management system.

Government records

Records created or received by elected members that relate to local government business must be captured, regardless of a record's format or where it was received, as part of the local government's corporate memory in accordance with the Shire's Recordkeeping Plan.

Government records include:

- Correspondence and communications
- File notes made after verbal communications, meetings, phone calls etc.
- Video and audio recordings
- Photographs
- Email
- Social Media posts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)



- Databases
- Websites
- Messages from Apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger)
- TXT messages.

When to create and capture a record:

- Information is related to Council business
- An action is required
- A decision or commitment is made
- Business need: for future reference by yourself or others
- Historical: identifies Council activity over time.

What should be recorded?

Communications	Examples
Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints and compliments• Correspondence concerning corporate matters• Submissions, petitions and lobbying• Information for Council's interest relating to local government business activity and functions.
Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone, meetings and other verbal conversations regarding local government projects or business activities• Addresses, speeches and presentations delivered as part of an elected member's official duties.
Social media	<p>Where the post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates interest from the public or media• Communicates decisions or commits the local government to an action• Seek feedback• Addresses issues of safety, and/or• Relate to sensitive or contentious issues.
Work diaries/appointment books	Where it contains information that may be significant to the conduct of the elected member on behalf of the local government.

What doesn't need to be recorded?

Communications	Examples
Duplicate copies	Council meeting agenda, minutes and papers.
Draft documents or working papers	Where they are already captured at the local government.
Publications	Newsletters, circulars, journals etc.
Invitations	To community events where an elected member is not representing Council or the local government.
Verbal	Which: <ul style="list-style-type: none">convey routine information only, ordo not relate to local government business or functions.
Elections	Electioneering or party-political information.
Personal records	Communications not related to an elected member's official duties.

How to capture records

Elected members can forward records of continuing value to the Shire for incorporation into the records management system.

Elected members can do this by:

- forwarding emails/electronic records to emrecords@ashburton.wa.gov.au, or
- hard copy records can be hand delivered to the Shire's administration offices or given to the Governance Officer at any Ordinary Council Meeting.

Elected member correspondence

Correspondence addressed to elected members received at the Shire office, including those marked Private, Confidential, Personal will be opened by designated officers, and if of continuing value, incorporated into the records management system, before forwarding to the elected member.

Definitions

Record means information recorded in any form created or received and maintained by an organisation in the transaction of business and kept as evidence of such activity and includes:

- anything in which there is writing or Braille,
- a map, plan, diagram, or graph,

- a drawing, pictorial or graphic work, or photograph,
- anything on which there are figure marks, perforations, or symbols, having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them,
- anything from which images, sounds or writings can be reproduced with or without the aid of anything else; and
- anything on which information has been stored or recorded, either mechanically, magnetically, or electronically.

Relevant policies/documents

Shire of Ashburton Recordkeeping Plan

[State Records Office – Records Management Advice – Local Government Elected Members' Records](#)

Relevant legislation/local laws

Section 2.7 of the *Local Government Act 1995*

State Records Act 2000

Freedom of Information Act 1992

Office use only				
Relevant delegations	Nil			
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