



ELM16 ELECTED MEMBERS RECORD KEEPING POLICY

Aim	Local governments must ensure that appropriate practices are established to facilitate the ease of capture and management of elected members records up to and including the decision making process of Council
Application	Elected Members
Statutory Environment	<i>Local Government Act Section 2.7 – The Role of Council, State Records Act (2000), Freedom of Information Act (1992)</i>
Principles	Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027 (Desktop Review 2019) Goal 05 Inspiring Governance Objective 3 Council leadership
Approval Date	OMC 17 December 2019 (MINUTE: 722/2019)

OBJECTIVES

Provide guidance to elected members in regards to their record keeping responsibilities in line with legislative requirements.

Provide record keeping principles that identify and protect local government records of continuing value.

Provide guidance on the disposal of local government records, particularly those that have no continuing value.

Define strategies that will support and document accountability and responsibility throughout local government.



STATEMENT

Elected members records are important and necessary as they serve 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 Council and should be incorporated into the Shire's record keeping system. Some records have no continuing value to Council and may be destroyed when reference to them ceases. (GDALG – General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, ref 1.1).

DEFINITIONS

Record as defined in the (General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records RD2010046 GDALG ref: 1.9) 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.

RECORDS CAPTURE AND CONTROL

Types of Records created and received by Elected Members

The following guidelines relate to the records created in any format (e.g. paper, word processed documents, email) or received by any method (e.g. post, fax, email, hand delivered). Elected members can forward records of continuing value to the Council for incorporation into the record keeping system.

All records created and received in the course of the Shire's business regardless of the format are to be captured into the Shire's record keeping system. Elected members can do this by:

- Forwarding emails to emrecords@ashburton.wa.gov.au, this email address is monitored by the CEO's Administration Staff who will capture the record for elected members



- EMACCESS documentation will be recorded by the CEO's Administration Staff
- The Website discussion board will be monitored by our Web Host Key to Creative. Any additions to this website will be included in the weekly records reports.
- Hard copy record can be given to the CEO's Administration Staff at the conclusion of the Council meetings.

Records access:

- *Elected Members* – Access to the Shire's records will be via the CEO Executive Administration Staff in accordance with the Local Government Act (1995).

GUIDELINES

Government Records of Continuing Value

Government records of continuing value are records created or received which –

1. Contain information that is of administrative value to Council. These records may be referred to for many administrative purposes, including the need:-
 - To check an interpretation of Council policy or the rationale behind it,
 - To check the facts on a particular case or provide information to management,
 - To monitor progress and coordination of responses to issues,
 - To document formal communications and/or transactions (e.g. a minute, report or submission) between elected members and another party, and
 - To document elected members' decisions, directives, reasons and actions.
2. Contain information that is of legal value to Council on the basis that there are statutory requirements or court orders that stipulate the retention of records, which must be observed.
3. Contain information of fiscal value to Council that includes original records documentation the receipt, expenditure and control of public money that must be left for a period of time, and will facilitate transparent accountability by the officers responsible.
4. Contain information about the legal rights and obligations of Local Government including elected members, ratepayers, organisations and the general community. Contain information of historical value to Council and to the State.



Government Records External in nature to the Shire of Ashburton:

- Elected members are involved in external meetings as part of their role as an Elected Member of the Shire. (GDALG ref: 25.2, 25.3, 25.4, 73) Information where the Agenda is not replicated in the Council Minutes and/or copies of agendas of meetings and minutes should be recorded into the Shire of Ashburton's record keeping system.
- Diaries, appointment books and desk calendars (e.g. bunch dates) are generally used to record appointments. They may also be used to record messages and notes, some of which may only be an aide memoire of a routine nature, and some of which may be significant to the conduct of Council business. (GDALD ref: 38).

NB. It is strongly recommended that elected members maintain separate diaries or appointment books for personal and official use.

- Correspondence addressed to elected members at their private address or post box that is a government record and is of continuing value should be forwarded for incorporation into Council's record keeping system along with any response which the elected member may have made.
- Messages and other facilitating instructions may be sent or received via a range of methods, such as telephone and voice-mail, post-it notes or sticky notes, facsimile, pieces of paper, transmission reports. Email and facsimile are considered records.

Government Records Internal in nature to the Shire of Ashburton:

- Correspondence addressed to elected members at the Shire office, including those marked Private, Confidential, Personal are opened by designated officers, and if of continuing value, incorporated into the record keeping system, before forwarding to the elected member via the Records Department and CEO's Administration Staff.
- Drafts of addresses, speeches, reports, correspondence, file notes that are not circulated to other elected members or staff of the Council, and of which the final version has been produced and forwarded for incorporation into the Council's record keeping system. (GDALG ref:1.6)
- Drafts circulated to other elected members or staff of the Council, where only editorial or typographical changes have occurred, and of which a final version has been produced and forwarded for incorporation in the Council's record keeping system.
- Duplicates of records issued to an elected member by the Council for information or reference purposes only and where the original or authorised copy is captured in the Shire's record keeping system.



- Duplicates of internal or external publications issued or received for information or reference purposes (e.g. annual reports, brochures, trade journals, price lists).
- Routine facilitative instructions, such as edit corrections, distribution lists for information purposes, simple administrative instructions and social invitations and messages.
- Original messages that have been transferred or transcribed into appropriate formats for incorporation into the Council's record keeping system.
- Working papers, background notes and reference material that are used to prepare or complete other documents. (GDALG ref: 1.9).