Organisational policy

Information Access and Use

Approved by CEO:

10 November 2023

Considered by ELT: 25 October 2023

Policy purpose

Council information underpins Council's efficiency, decision-making and risk management and should also be publicly available where relevant to meet community expectations.

The purpose of this policy is to outline Sunshine Coast Council's (Council) approach to the access, exchange, publishing, and classification of information.

This policy supports Councils' commitment to the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI), by promoting proactive release of information.

Policy scope

This policy relates to information access, use and licensing, and applies to:

- All Council employees (including contingent workers, contractors, agency casuals, and volunteers).
- Partners, customers, and members of the general public who access Council information.

This policy applies to all information created, collected, managed, and stored by Council in all forms including, but not limited to:

- Information in Council business systems and repositories, including information presented in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical forms.
- Data released for public access via Open Data Platform, Development.I and other public facing mediums

This policy does not replace, modify, or revoke any legislative or administrative requirements or processes that apply to the publication or release of information (e.g., requirements to make information available under law, complaints / investigation processes, requests for information that are primarily contractual disputes or usual business practices involving release of information).

This policy is not intended to interfere with, or restrict, operational areas routinely releasing information that is necessary while performing day-to-day functions and activities of Council.

Policy statement

Council information underpins Council's efficiency, decision-making and risk management.

Information collected, created, received, used, and shared by Council will be classified based on the Queensland Government Information Security Classification Framework (QGISCF), and information will be protected and managed in accordance with the applied security classification.

Council's Information Asset Register (IAR) will support this policy, providing evidence of the identification and classification of Council's information assets and facilitating information management, access, use, re-use and sharing.

Information will only be available to authorised users or recipients based on the security classification assigned to information and access to sensitive and protected information will be managed, monitored, reviewed, and reported.

This policy must be read and complied with in accordance with the *Information Access and Use Guidelines, Open Data Guidelines, Information Security Policy, Records Management Policy, Administrative Access & Right to Information Policy, Information Privacy Policy, Information Asset Custodianship Policy,* and relevant guidelines.

Policy requirements

- Council information assets will be classified in accordance with the QGISCF and captured in the Council's IAR.
- Council information will be provided to the public free of charge to the maximum extent possible, in accordance with legislative and Council policy requirements.
- Council will support and ensure the exchange of information with other government agencies and groups identified by Council, with formal data sharing agreements.
- Council information will have appropriate management and access of information assets captured within Council's IAR.
- Council will apply the most appropriate Creative Commons licence to information made available to the public, subject to legislative and Council policy requirements.
- Council will publish Open Data sets that have been endorsed for release on Sunshine Coast's Open Data Platform

Classification

As per the QGISCF, information assets will be classified using a Business Impact Level (BIL) assessment to measure the impact from the loss, compromise, and misuse of information in terms of the confidentiality (C), integrity (I) and availability (A).

The confidentiality labels to be applied to classify Council's information assets are:

Confidentiality requirement	Classification label	Minimum controls
Low	PUBLIC	As per QGEA and Council's risk assessment.
Low	OFFICIAL	As per QGEA and Council's risk assessment.
Medium	SENSITIVE	As per QGEA and Council's risk assessment.
High	PROTECTED	As per QGEA and Council's risk assessment. Council must consider the controls outlined for PROTECTED information in ACSM ISM.
National Security Information (NSI)		Not covered by QGISCF. Seek advice from QPS.

Figure 1: Confidentiality labels derived from the QGISCF.

Policy application

This policy is based on IS33 which is a foundational policy in the Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture and is considered best practice for Information Access and Use in Queensland.

Policy review

The Chief Information Officer will oversee a review of this policy at least every 4 years, with policy risk factors to trigger earlier reviews as required.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Information Asset Owner	Is responsible under the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) for the safe custody of: • All records about the proceedings, accounts or transactions of Council or its committees. • All information owned or held by Council. The Information Asset Owner is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
Information Technology Steering Committee (ITSC)	Provides strategic advice to the Information Asset Owner on the management of Information Assets.

	Is an escalation point for advice on issues or risks related to information assets raised by Information Asset Custodians.
Chief Information Officer (CIO)	Responsible for overseeing regular reviews of this policy and advise results of the review and make recommendations for change (if required or desirable) to the ITSC.
Information Asset Custodian	- Recommending the appropriate security classification for information, identifying the legislative and risk factors that justify the classification. - Ensuring information assets are classified in accordance with the QGISCF and captured within Council's IAR. - Advising on and approving the appropriate access and use of Council's information assets based on the security classification. - Advising on and approving access controls for Council's sensitive and protected information. - Identifying when the business impact for information has changed (e.g., local government meetings' information considered sensitive or protected), leading to an updated classification level, resulting in information being made available more widely within Council or to the public. - Ensuring Council information is made available to the public to the maximum extent possible in accordance with legislative and policy requirements. - Ensuring the exchange of information with other government agencies and groups identified by Council is conducted in a secure way and in accordance with security classification levels, processes, guidelines, policy, and legislative requirements.
Information Management Team Leader	- Conducting monitoring activities across the IAR to ensure the management and maintenance of information assets within the register is compliant with relevant policies, procedures, regulations, and legislation. - Monitoring the regulatory environment to ensure any changes are accounted for and applied across Council's policies, procedures, and guidelines. - Ensuring appropriate information management-related training is kept current and available for Council staff, including for Information Asset Custodians. - Providing high-level guidance to Council staff, including to Information Asset Custodians, about information management-related processes and procedures.

Measurements of success

Measure	Outcome sought
Right to Information requests	A decrease in formal access applications under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) and/or the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) relative to other release mechanisms
Open Data	Increase in the number of datasets available for public consumption on the Open Data Platform
Public Information Asset Register	Increase in the percentage of Information Assets listed on the Information Asset Register for public release
Information Security Classification	Improvement in the amount of council information classified against the QGISCF enabling appropriate security and access controls to be applied.

Definitions

Refer to Council's Policy Framework for definitions of common terms. The following contains definitions for terms specific to this policy. For otherwise undefined terms, the plain English meaning informs interpretation.

Term	Definition
Information	Information is any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified, or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes a presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical forms.
Information Asset	An identifiable collection of data stored in any manner and recognised as having value to enable the Council to perform its

	business functions, thereby satisfying a recognised Council requirement e.g. files, databases, paper-based and electronic documents, records, hardware items, software or other infrastructure items.
Information Asset Register	An information asset register listing the existing information assets across Council. It enables users of information to identify the available information resources from a single source and provides Information Asset Custodians with an overview of the information assets under their care.
Information Asset Custodian	The recognised officer responsible for implementing and maintaining information assets according to the rules set by the owner to ensure proper quality, security, integrity, correctness, consistency, privacy, confidentiality, and accessibility.
Open Data	Initiatives by governments to make publicly funded, non-sensitive data available without restriction via the internet.
Open Data Platform	Council's website used for hosting Open Data sets and APIs

POLICY INFORMATION	
Title	Information Access and Use Policy
Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to outline Sunshine Coast Council's (Council) approach to the access, exchange, publishing, and classification of information.
Document number	D2023/1122222 Corporate Governance to update with FINAL EDDIE reference>
Corporate Plan reference	Goal Our Outstanding Organisation Pathway Maintain a sustainable organisation that is well placed to respond to the needs of our growing region. Service Output Digital information services
Category	Digital Information Services
Subcategory	Information Management
ELT advice date	25 October 2023
CEO approval date	10 November 2023
Effective date	10 November 2023
Review schedule	A full review must be undertaken within every four years, and reviewed policy document must be provided to highest level approval authority for endorsement. Reviews may occur more regularly as required, having regard to a policy risk assessment.
Last review	Established 2023
Next review	2026
Policy holder	The Manager responsible for this policy is: Chief Information Officer
Approval authority	CEO has authority to endorse material changes on advice of ELT. Relevant Group Executive has authority to approve non-material changes. Relevant policy holder has authority to approve minor non-material changes.
RELATED DOCUMENTS	
Legislation	*Local Government Act 2009 (QLD)* *Public Records Act (2002) QLD* *Right to Information Act 2009 (QLD)* *Information Privacy Act (2009) QLD* *Human Rights Act 2019*
Policy setting documents	Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Information Asset Custodianship Policy (IS33) ISO 16175 (Information and documentation — Processes and functional requirements for software for managing records).
Operational documents	Information Access and Use Guidelines Open Data Guidelines Records Management Policy Information Security Policy Information Asset Custodianship Policy

VERSION CONTROL				
Version	**Reason/Trigger**	**Change**	**Endorsed/Reviewed by**	**Date**
1.0	Information Classification Review. Service Maturity and Capability Uplift.	Human rights compatibility assessed	CEO on advice of ITSC	10 November 2023