



## DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

14<sup>th</sup> December 2004

<b>DCS5</b>	<b>COUNCIL'S ARCHIVES PROGRAM AND THE MICRO FILMING OF COUNCIL RECORDS</b>
	<b>FILE: A3-15 PJH</b>

### SUMMARY:

Reporting Council's Archives Program and the Microfilming of Council Records



### DESCRIPTION:

At Council's meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2004 Councillor Sowter was advised that a report would be prepared on the funding required to microfilm old Council records such as minute books and rate books.

The historical importance in preservation of these records was raised in the address to Council by Mrs Billie Crawford of the Macleay River Historical Society at the October 2004 Council meeting.

While the importance of the records is acknowledged, Council must consider these records, not in isolation, but as part of its overall records management program.

Council, as yet, has not identified all of its State Records (i.e. council minutes and agendas; rate books; heritage or significant development and building applications; any records created prior to 1920; etc) This process will form part of the records program which, with the appointment of an Archives Officer who is expected to commence with Council in early January 2005 will schedule the identification into the program. Not only do the records need to be identified they also need to have open and closed public access provisions applied to them.

The Archives Officer will investigate methods such as microfilming and scanning of State Records as part of the Records Program. If microfilming was the option taken, consideration not only to the initial cost of microfilming the documents is required, but also the cost of equipment to read and print the microfilms. A previous quote for such equipment was between \$30,000 to \$50,000. This was for one reader and one printer only. If there was only one reader and one printer in Council this means that only one officer will be able to view, retrieve or print information. Consideration also has to be taken into account of our proposed new structure and that there would be a

likelihood of 3 readers and 3 printers required, 1 for the new Regulatory Services Department (this department retrieves 3 to 30 building and development applications from archives each day) the 2<sup>nd</sup> for the new Customer First Centre which will be dealing directly with our customers and the 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Records Section of Council.

At this stage, the other option of scanning into Civicview (our current recordkeeping system) and using the technology and equipment that will be required to enable Kempsey Shire Council to implement an Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) appears to be a more logical, practical and cost effective format to take. This will allow staff to retrieve information via one system only, preventing confusion about how to use the different systems and all the access, security and privacy issues will be applied as per the State Records Act. It is proposed that during 2005 Civicview will develop an ERMS and the system will be introduced at Kempsey Shire Council in 2006.

State Records in October 2004 released "Recordkeeping in Brief No. 37 Day Boxing Dilemma: Advice for NSW Councils" this document provides advice about which paper records can be destroyed after imaging providing the electronic system meets stringent tests. This Advice will provide Council with the opportunity to then destroy paper records and save on storage costs. (i.e. records that are significant; are cultural; and council minutes are some of the records that must be retained in both the imaged and original paper format).

The appointed Archives Officer will formulate an Archives Program in the first six months of his appointment. This program will detail the future direction archives management will encompass at Kempsey Shire Council including costs involved. To enable the Archives Officer to do this, initial funding will be required in the vicinity of \$10,000 to provide shelving for the existing archives building, computer line access, disposal costs, training with State Records and site visits to other archive centres.

As the program will be ongoing it will be recommended that a provision of \$10,000 be listed for consideration in each year of the 5 year budget.

## **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

### ▪ **Environmental**

***Council's Archives officer will review our current procedures to determine the best environmental implication. Council's current records disposal consists of using a shredding company to collect and shred old records that can be destroyed in accordance the Local Government Records Disposal schedule. This method is considered the best environmental disposal method compared to other methods of burying at landfill or burning which are still used by other Councils.***

### ▪ **Social**

***The historical value of old records provides important information on the local area and has a social value to the residents.***

### ▪ **Economic (Financial)**

*The aim of Council's records management program (including archives) is to prepare for the future covering both electronic and paper records and there will be significant set up costs. The best economic solution for all records is to include all records in the proposed CivicView system as mentioned above. There is no funding allocated in the current 5 year budget for the Archives Program other than the salary of the Archives Officer. An initial allocation is sought so the Archives Officer can undertake some preliminary work on the set up of our Archives building and training. Other funds are needed to set up a computer line to the Archives building. It will be recommended these costs be funded from savings in the salary vote for the Archives Officer (these savings occurred due to timeframe delays in the appointment of the Archives Officer).*

▪ **Policy or Statutory**

*Council is required to comply with the State Records Act in the keeping of its records.*

▪ **Director's Review**

*Nil*

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1 That the information be noted.
- 2 That \$10,000 be transferred from the allocation for Administration salaries to fund the commencement of the Archives Program in the 2004 / 2005 year.
- 3 That the allocation of funding of \$10,000 per annum for Council's Archive Program be listed for consideration in the 5 year budget from 2005/2006.

.....  
**G B Snape**  
**DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES**