



LEETON  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**AUDIO RECORDING OF  
COUNCIL MEETINGS  
POLICY**

DECEMBER 2019

## DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION

<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	Records Officer				
<b>REVIEWED BY</b>	Senior Management Team				
<b>DATE ADOPTED:</b>	4 December 2019				
<b>ADOPTED BY:</b>	Senior Management Team				
<b>RESOLUTION NO: (IF RELEVANT):</b>	n/a				
<b>REVIEW DUE DATE:</b>	December 2023				
<b>REVISION NUMBER:</b>	0				
<b>PREVIOUS VERSIONS:</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS</b>	<b>AUTHOR/ EDITOR</b>	<b>REVIEW/ SIGN OFF</b>	<b>MINUTE NO (IF RELEVANT)</b>

## REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed every four years or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage of Council and in the spirit of this Policy. Any amendment to the Policy must be by way of a Council Resolution or the approval of the General Manager.

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# 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the purpose for which audio recordings of Leeton Shire Council meetings are made and set out procedures for audio recording of Council and committee meetings in regard to appropriate creation, storage, usage, access, and disposal in accordance with legislative and policy requirements.

# 2. Policy scope

This policy applies to each Ordinary and Extraordinary meeting of Leeton Shire Council, and Standing Committee Meetings where the membership of the Committee is comprised entirely of Councillors.

Other Advisory Meetings, Councillor briefings and other Council-related meetings (for example meetings of s355 Committees) are not covered by this policy, as audio recording is not undertaken for these other Council-related meetings.

This policy does not apply to the webcasting (audio-visual live streaming) of Council meetings. This policy is limited to audio recording undertaken for the purpose of record keeping.

# 3. Outcomes

Audio recording of Council Meetings will assist in the preparation of minutes and provide a system of verification to ensure the accuracy of minutes until these records are procedurally and formally adopted as a true and accurate record.

# 4. Policy Statement

In accordance with Section 375(1) of the Local Government Act and associated Regulations, councils are required to keep accurate minutes of Ordinary Meetings of Council, or any Standing Committee Meeting where the membership of the committee is entirely comprised of Councillors.

By endorsing appropriate arrangements for audio recording, Council will meet its legislative and regulatory obligations with respect to preparing accurate minutes of Council meetings and of meetings of committees whose membership comprises only Councillors.

## Audio Recording Process:

4.1 In order to comply with the *Surveillance Devices Act 2007* and the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* advice will be provided to the members of the public attending meetings that an audio recording of the meeting will be made. The wording of the advice will be as follows: "This meeting is being audio recorded for minute-taking purposes".

The advice will be stated verbally at the commencement of each meeting, and displayed on the notice of agenda for meetings of Council and committees.

Individuals requesting to address Council at one of its meetings will be advised that their address will be recorded.

4.2 Recordings of closed meetings (or parts of meetings) will not be accessible to members of the public.

- 4.3 A Councillor or Council officer wishing to listen to an audio recording must apply to the General Manager, or their delegate, and give details of the item concerned (if relevant) and the reason for the request, for administrative and audit purposes.
- 4.4 Audio recordings of standing committee meetings and ordinary (and extraordinary) meetings are available to Councillors and approved members of staff only until Council confirms the minutes of the meeting.
- 4.5 The recording of Council meetings shall begin at the commencement of the chairperson's attendance at the meeting and conclude when the chairperson declares the meeting closed.

### **Record Keeping Requirements**

- 4.6 Audio files are 'temporary' records of Council. Their purpose is to assist in the preparation of minutes. Once the minutes are confirmed, the audio files no longer have a purpose. The official record of the meeting is not the audio recording but the meeting minutes, which require confirmation by Council resolution and must be signed by the chairperson of the meeting.
- 4.7 Audio recordings will be stored securely by Council so that only persons authorised to do so by the General Manager can access them.
- 4.8 Audio recordings will be stored for three months after the minutes from the meeting to which they relate are confirmed by Council (refer to State Records General Disposal Authority (GA39) – Local Government Records), except where retention for a longer period is otherwise required.
- 4.9 Due to the nature of technical recording equipment, the Council does not guarantee that audio recordings will be continuous or fault-free.

### **Access to Recordings**

#### **4.10 Access by staff**

Audio recordings will only be accessed by staff with the General Manager's approval. Generally, approval will only be given where the minutes of the meeting concerned have not yet been confirmed.

#### **4.11 Access by Councillors**

Access by councillors will be provided by means of listening to audio recordings in the presence of a Council employee, approved by the General Manager, during business hours of the Council.

Access can only be provided up until such time as the minutes of the meeting to which the audio recording relates are confirmed.

If a Councillor requests a copy of a Council meeting audio recording to be supplied, the request must be placed in writing to the General Manager and give details of the item concerned and the reason for the request. If the request is approved by the General Manager, the recording shall then be prepared and available for collection by the Councillor within 48 hours.

Councillors must return the recording to the General Manager once Council confirms the minutes of the subject meeting.

#### **4.12 Access by members of the public**

Requests to access audio recordings will be considered in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* within the 3 month period when the recordings are retained.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

<b>Mayor (or delegate)</b>	has responsibility for ensuring the advice that the meeting is being recorded is stated at the commencement of each Council meeting.
<b>General Manager</b>	has responsibility for ensuring access to recordings is only made in line with this Policy.
<b>Records Officer</b>	is responsible for ensuring the record management responsibilities in relation to recordings are met.

## 6. Definitions

<b>Committee Meeting</b>	Committees of Council where all councillors are members.
<b>Audio Recording</b>	Means any recording made by any electronic device capable of recording sound. This includes but is not limited to recordings made by video camera, cassette recorder, or Digital AudioTape (DAT) recorder, and stored on compact disc (CD), DAT, or in any other format (such as WAV, MP3, etc).

## 7. Legislation and Supporting Documents

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Surveillance Devices Act 2007*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- State Records General Disposal Authority (GA39) – Local Government Records
- Leeton Shire Council's Records Management Policy

## 8. Attachments

Nil.