

Item 8.

Adoption - Archives Collection Management Policy

File No: X093219

Summary

This report seeks Council approval for the revised Archives Collection Management Policy.

The City of Sydney manages a large and diverse archive of items including historical documents, maps and photographs. It also selectively acquires archives from other institutions and individuals when they have a relationship to the City's local government area.

The Archives Collection Management Policy details the City's commitment to maintaining its archives and provides a framework for the acquisition, arrangement and description, storage and management of the City's Archives, and its use by staff and the public. It also outlines the criteria for collecting archives from the community to enhance the City's archival collection.

The City's Archives hold over 12,500 shelf metres of archives dating back to the establishment of Council in 1842. Over a million items have been catalogued to date with more than half available digitally. The Archives capture and document the business, social and community history of the City of Sydney and its communities. The Archives provide a valuable and popular resource for the community, with over 159,200 page views of the online catalogue in March 2024.

Council adopted the Archives Collection Management Policy, following a public exhibition period on 27 July 2020.

The Archives Collection Management Policy is now four years old. In this revision, a new section was added to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and discuss how records by or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are managed in the City Archives collection. This new section was developed in consultation with the City's Indigenous Leadership and Engagement team and consultation was undertaken with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel who supported this addition.

Other minor changes were also made.

It is recommended that Council adopt the revised Archives Collection Management Policy.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council adopt the updated Archives Collection Management Policy as shown at Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Archives Collection Management Policy in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

Attachment A. Archives Collection Management Policy – Review 2024

Background

1. The City of Sydney manages its own archives and selectively acquires from other institutions and individuals when they have a relationship to the City's local government area.
2. The Archives Collection Management Policy was first adopted by Council in July 2020 as a public policy. Its purpose is to educate staff and the community:
 - (a) about the purpose and value of the City Archives; and
 - (b) regarding the steps the City takes to identify, safeguard and preserve archival resources and make them accessible to the public.
3. The Policy is supported by associated staff processes and procedures.
4. In 2022, the City Archives implemented a program to deliver actions that improve the management of archives by or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. As part of this ongoing program this Policy has been revised.
5. The section called "We recognise and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their histories and cultures" was added to address the management protocols adopted for these records. This:
 - (a) acknowledges the Gadigal as the traditional owners of the land and outlines the City's commitment to reconciliation;
 - (b) discusses the scope of records held regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in order to manage expectations about the City's holdings;
 - (c) indicates the City's commitment to frameworks for facilitating access, managing offensive material, supporting the 'right of reply' and safeguarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights to their heritage and culture; and
 - (d) encourages use of the collection by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
6. Minor stylistic changes to the policy have also been made and additional definitions have been included for clarity. References to regulatory authorities have been updated to reflect changes in the State Records Act 1988.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

7. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This policy is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - The City Archives actively collects material relating to community and culture and supports creative engagement with the City's history.

8. The inclusion of the section on items relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities recognises First Nations people and demonstrates the City Archives' commitment to the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

Risks

9. There are no significant risks in implementing the policy updates.

Social / Cultural / Community

10. The policy supports the capture and availability of information relating to diverse cultural groups within the Sydney local area. The City Archives regularly engages with a range of community and cultural groups through its collection.

Financial Implications

11. There are no financial implications associated with the continued implementation of this policy.

Relevant Legislation

12. State Records Act 1998.
13. Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.
14. Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.
15. Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).
16. Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).

Public Consultation

17. The new section of the policy, was developed in consultation with the City's Indigenous Leadership and Engagement team and consultation was undertaken with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel. Stakeholders supported the addition of the section.

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