

Confidentiality Statement

Whether you are a permanent or temporary employee of the council, a consultant or a casual or agency worker, you are likely to have access to sensitive information. Information is deemed sensitive if it is either of a personal nature, is commercially sensitive, or where its' disclosure would be problematic for the council or the person who is the subject of the data.

You may have access to sensitive information through records or reports, either on a computer system or in hard copy, or you may overhear comments. This information may or may not be connected with your specific duties.

You must treat all such information as strictly confidential and you must not discuss anything you learn with anyone who does not have a need to know. If you do not need to access such information in the first place, **don't** - even if you have physical access via, for instance, a staff or client database – as doing so may be regarded as an offence if you do not have a need to know.

Our service users and employees must be confident that their personal information will not be released to anyone outside the council unless:

- an agreement is in place to share information with other organisations we work with.
- there is a legal requirement to do so.
- it has been assessed that an individual poses a risk to the physical safety of others and those at risk need to be informed. This could include other workers, partner agencies, carers or members of the public.
- where there are safeguarding concerns and someone's life may be at risk.
- the person whose information is being shared has given their consent.

If you are in any doubt about whether you can or should disclose something speak to your manager immediately and read the Data Protection Policy. Search under *Information Management* on the council's intranet.

You are expected to maintain the confidentiality and security of information and to take all necessary steps to ensure this happens. You may be personally legally liable for any breach of confidentiality and also subject to disciplinary action. For agency and casual workers, your engagement will be terminated. Electronic systems can provide evidence of unauthorised access.

Please note: The above restrictions continue to apply even after your work for the County Council has finished.

Related policies you must read:

- [Data Protection Manual](#)
- [Managing Personal Data – A Guide for Managers](#)
- [Officers' Code of Conduct](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [Acceptable Use Policy](#)

Steve Munn

Chief HR Officer, October 2014