

Local authority information sharing and data protection checklist

Some key questions for leaders and senior managers:

- Who is the officer responsible for information governance and are they aware of their responsibilities?
- Do you have a Cabinet Member with lead responsibility for Data Protection Act (DPA) compliance?
- Is your authority registered with the ICO as required by the DPA?
- What transparency arrangements do we have in place for releasing and publishing information to the public?
- What procedures do we have in place for keeping data secure?
- What information governance arrangement do we have in place for sharing information, and for exchanging it securely when appropriate, with partners?
- What procedures do we have in place for responding to freedom of information, information sharing and data protection subject access requests?
- What are the risks to the authority with regard to data and how are they being addressed?
- Is our information managed efficiently or can we make improvements?
- What training do we give members and officers on data protection and information sharing and how do we ensure that knowledge is kept up to date?

Security

- As part of training, are the workforce made aware of the importance of checking that only relevant information is sent to the right recipient, and that robust processes are in place to confirm that it has been received?
- When transporting sensitive personal information, either electronic or paper, is it securely held?
- Is encryption used to protect personal information? Particularly when it applies to removable storage devices eg usb sticks.
- Are relevant employees aware to carry out identity checks before giving out personal information over the telephone? Some people will try and trick them out of information over the phone.
- Are they made aware that only a limited amount of personal data should be given out over the phone and that written confirmation might be necessary?
- Is confidential waste, either electronic or paper, securely disposed of? Failure to comply with this is a major cause of enforcement notices under the DPA.

Managing personal information

- Do your employees know to only collect the personal information they need for a specific business purpose?
- Is the requirement to tell individuals about new or changed business purposes understood?
- Is importance given to keeping information accurate and up to date?
- Is personal information that is no longer required securely disposed of according to data retention rules?