



**Information Commissioner's Office**  
Promoting public access to official information  
and protecting your personal information

## **Press Release**

### **For immediate release**

Date: 26 January 2007

### **New guidance for local authorities on use of residents' council tax information**

Council tax information, such as residents' names and addresses, collected by local authorities can be used for other purposes, according to new guidance published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The guidance outlines how this information can be used in a way that complies with the Data Protection Act.

Before a local authority uses council tax information for other purposes, such as to populate a customer relationship management database, it must consider a number of questions, such as will the information be adequately protected from improper use or disclosure and do individuals understand how the authority will use their personal information. It is also important to consider the effect that using or sharing the information will have on individuals.

Iain Bourne, Head of Information Sharing at the ICO, said: "We have advised a large number of local authorities about the use of council tax information. This clear guidance will help local authorities to make the best use of the information they hold whilst protecting the people the information is about."

Local authorities that are considering using council tax information for other purposes should also be aware of their other legal obligations.

*'The use of personal information held for collecting and administering council tax'* has been published to coincide with the European Data Protection Day on 29 January 2007.

## ENDS

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner's press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the specific section of the by following the link;

[Good practice notes](#).

### Notes to Editors

1. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003.
2. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)
3. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with eight principles, which make sure that personal information is:
  - Fairly and lawfully processed
  - Processed for limited purposes
  - Adequate, relevant and not excessive
  - Accurate and up to date
  - Not kept for longer than is necessary
  - Processed in line with your rights
  - Secure
  - Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection
4. This piece of guidance is part of a series aimed at making data protection simpler.
5. The website also carries copies of other good practice and technical guidance notes in this series. These include:
  - a. Subject access and third party information
  - b. CCTV
  - c. Subject access and employment references
  - d. Pension trustees
  - e. Professionals' opinions
  - f. Buying and selling databases
  - g. Outsourcing
  - h. Exam guidance
  - i. Privacy Enhancing Technologies