



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

## **Press Release**

**Date: 8 September 2008**

### **ICO issues new guidance on publication of details of council meetings**

The ICO is urging local authorities to consider data protection when publishing documents relating to council meetings, such as agendas, reports and minutes, which may contain personal information.

The ICO has published [new guidance](#) on this issue to help local authorities meet data protection requirements. Recent amendments to the Local Government Act have resulted in a number of councils contacting the ICO for clarification on how the changes will impact on their obligations under the Data Protection Act.

The guidance explains the steps councils must take in order to comply with the Data Protection Act when publishing documents relating to council meetings. It also advises councils on the redaction of personal information when disclosing details of meetings under the Freedom of Information Act.

Phil Jones, Assistant Commissioner at the ICO, said: "Transparency in local government is central to improving public trust in councils. Publishing details of council meetings is an important part of this. However, councils must ensure that they safeguard individuals' privacy by keeping personal information confidential where appropriate. This guidance explains how councils can achieve openness whilst complying with the Data Protection Act."

A [copy of the guidance](#) can be downloaded from the ICO website – [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

**ENDS**

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner's press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

### 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. 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
  - j. Council tax information
  - k. Information on the electoral register