



## **Introduction**

This policy forms part of the Corporate Information Governance Group policy framework. It supercedes all previous policy on this subject matter.

## **Scope**

This Policy applies to, but is not limited to, all of the councils, Councillors, Employees, Partners, contractual third parties and agents of the councils.

## **Public Services Network Personal Commitment**

### **Background**

The Public Sector Network (PSN) is a secure private Wide-Area Network (WAN) which enables secure interactions between connected Local Authorities and organisations that sit on the pan-government secure network infrastructure.

Some council staff will be required to have access to the facilities operated on this network in order for them to carry out their business. This may include staff having access to a secure email facility (GCSX email) or the DWP's Customer Information System. All staff requiring access to the PSN network in any way will be required to read and understand this Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) and accept the Personal Commitment Statement.

This policy and statement does not replace the council's existing acceptable usage, or any other, policies. It is a supplement to them.

### **Key Messages**

All users of the PSN must be aware of the commitments and security measures surrounding the use of this network.

### **Risks**

There are risks associated with users accessing and handling information in order to conduct official council business.

This policy aims to mitigate the following risks:

- A breach of the Code of Connection for the PSN
- Loss of restricted information and data
- Information and data security incidents

Non-compliance with this policy could have a significant effect on the efficient operation of the council and may result in financial loss and an inability to provide necessary services to our customers.

### **Policy Detail**

Each PSN user must read, understand and verify they have read and accepted this policy.

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For the avoidance of doubt, the security rules relating to secure email and information systems usage include:

1. I acknowledge that my use of the PSN may be monitored and/or recorded for lawful purposes.
2. I agree to be responsible for any use by me of the PSN using my unique user credentials (user ID and password, access token or other mechanism as provided) and email address;
3. Will not use a colleague's credentials to access the PSN and will equally ensure that my credentials are not shared and are protected against misuse;
4. Will protect such credentials at least to the same level of secrecy as the information they may be used to access, (in particular, I will not write down or share my password other than for the purposes of placing a secured copy in a secure location at my employer's premises);
5. Will not attempt to access any computer system that I have not been given explicit permission to access;
6. Will not attempt to access the PSN other than from IT equipment and systems and locations which have been explicitly authorised to use for this purpose;
7. Will not transmit information via the PSN that I know, suspect or have been advised is of a higher level of sensitivity than my PSN domain is designed to carry (e.g. Secret or Top Secret);
8. Will not transmit information via the PSN that I know or suspect to be unacceptable within the context and purpose for which it is being communicated;
9. Will not make false claims or denials relating to my use of the PSN (e.g. falsely denying that an e-mail had been sent or received);
10. Will protect any sensitive or not protectively marked material sent, received, stored or processed by me via the PSN to the same level as I would paper copies of similar material;
11. Will always check that the recipients of e-mail messages are correct so that potentially sensitive information is not accidentally released into the public domain;
12. Will not auto-forward email from my GCSx email account to any other non-GCSx email account;
13. Will not forward or disclose any sensitive material received via the PSN unless the recipient(s) can be trusted to handle the material securely according to its sensitivity and forwarding is via a suitably secure communication channel;

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14. Will seek to prevent inadvertent disclosure of sensitive information by avoiding being overlooked when working, by taking care when printing information received via PSN (e.g. by using printers in secure locations or collecting printouts immediately they are printed, checking that there is no interleaving of printouts, etc.) and by carefully checking the distribution list for any material to be transmitted;
15. Will securely store or destroy any printed material;
16. Will not leave my computer unattended in such a state as to risk unauthorised disclosure of information sent or received via PSN - e.g. logging-off from the computer, activate a password-protected screensaver etc., so as to require a user logon for activation);
17. Where IT Services has implemented other measures to protect unauthorised viewing of information displayed on IT systems (such as an inactivity timeout that causes the screen to be blanked requiring a user logon for reactivation), then I will not attempt to disable such protection;
18. Will make myself familiar with the council's security policies, procedures and any special instructions that relate to PSN;
19. Will inform my manager immediately if I detect, suspect or witness an incident that may be a breach of security
20. Will not attempt to bypass or subvert system security controls or to use them for any purpose other than that intended;
21. Will not remove equipment or information from council premises without appropriate approval;
22. Will take precautions to protect all computer media and portable computers when carrying them outside my organisation's premises (e.g. leaving a laptop unattended or on display in a car such that it would encourage an opportunist theft);
23. Will not introduce viruses, Trojan horses or other malware into the system or PSN;
24. Will not disable anti-virus protection provided at my computer;
25. Will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and any other legal, statutory or contractual obligations that the council informs me are relevant; and
26. If I am about to leave the council, I will inform my manager prior to departure of any important information held in my account and manage my account in accordance with the council's email and records management policy.

## **Responsibilities and Personal Commitment Statement**

I, accept that I have been granted the access rights to PSN. I understand and accept the rights which have been granted, I understand the business reasons for these access rights, and I understand that breach of them, and specifically any attempt to access services or assets that I am not authorised to access, may lead to disciplinary action and specific sanctions. I also accept and will abide by this policy and personal commitment statement. I understand that failure to comply with this agreement, or the commission of any information security breaches, may lead to the invocation of the council's disciplinary policy.

If any user is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to the councils disciplinary procedure. If a criminal offence is considered to have been committed further action may be taken to assist in the prosecution of the offender(s).

If you do not understand the implications of this policy or how it may apply to you, seek advice from your line manager or IT Services.

## Policy Compliance

If any person or organisation in scope is found to have breached this policy one of the following consequences may be followed;

- Councils' disciplinary procedure.
- Breach of contract
- Member code of conduct

If you do not understand the implications of this policy or how it may apply to you, seek advice from your line manager or Senior Information Risk Officer.

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