

Members' roles

The corporate role:

being a member of the council, carrying out corporate functions. This includes sitting in Council or on committees, including ward committees, representing the council on other bodies, any work assisting that, such as attending training, briefings, working groups, or preparing for council decision to be made. Corporate includes departmental in this definition.

In this role a member is covered by the council's Notification when processing personal data.

Ward representative role:

Here a councillor acts (usually) alone to represent one or more of his or her constituents, usually in opposition to the corporate body. Typically this happens when someone has a complaint, or an objection to a proposal. Occasionally it means representing views inconsistent those of the corporate body;

Members each have their own notification to process personal data in this role.

Political role:

as a member of a political party. It is up to each party to arrange its own notification, and when processing personal data for party purposes a councillor must act within it.

Each role represents a different data controller, and disclosures from one to another – ie re-using, in a second role, something a member learned in an earlier one – must be consistent with the data protection principles. It should only be done if would have been proper to disclose the data in a letter or email.

Of the eight data protection principles, the most relevant are:

- (principle 1) the data subject is told what is happening (or has happened)
- (principle 2) the new use is consistent with the original purpose of collecting or processing it

for a further discussion see the information Commissioner's website at

<http://www.ico.gov.uk/documentUploads/General%20Advice%20for%20the%20Elected%20Members%20of%20Local%20Authorities.pdf>