



Councillor Chris Holley  
Convener, Service Improvement and  
Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

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*Date:* 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**BY EMAIL**

Dear Councillor Holley

Thank you for your letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and I would respond as follows.

**1. Whom the Council shares data with?**

Sharing data is key to the council's goal of delivering better, more efficient public services, and the Council shares a variety of service data with a wide range of external organisations and partners, both on a regular and ad hoc basis. A number of examples are shown below; however this list should in no way be viewed as comprehensive.

- Swansea's Council Tax data is shared with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on a monthly basis, as part of a national agreement with local authorities facilitated by the Digital Economy Act. It feeds into many vital economic, social and demographic statistics and will enable ONS to produce more accurate local level area population estimates and to be used for the operation and quality assurance of the 2021 Census.
- Address data from the Council's Local Land and Property Gazetteer is shared on a daily basis with Geoplace, a partnership jointly owned by the Local Government Association and Ordnance Survey (OS) which co-ordinates the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) to a common standard. This address database underpins and links many address-based Council services, and is the means by which the Council can access OS mapping data and products, and deliver real efficiencies and improvements in service delivery.
- The Council's Revenues and Benefits Service collects personal data about individuals and families. The Council shares this information with partner organisations under its legal obligations, including government departments, HMRC, DWP and (where the law allows) other departments and councils. Via these powers and procedures, Revenues and Benefits is able to administer the local taxes, services or benefits it is responsible for, including Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB).
- Information on people recorded on local authority registers of disabled people through the SSDA900 (Register of people with physical or sensory disabilities) and SSDA901 (Registers of people with learning disabilities) returns is supplied to Welsh Government and used to monitor adult and children's social services trends, to inform social services policy development and as a baseline for further analysis.



- The Annual Schools Census (PLASC) exercise is co-ordinated centrally by Welsh Government but with data initially collected and checked locally by all Councils in Wales. The information is shared by the Council and Welsh Government for schools planning, policy and to produce aggregate statistical outputs.
- The Council's Economic Regeneration and Planning department will collect place-based data as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) annual monitoring process and is obliged to share data with Welsh Government through the lifetime of the LDP.

As noted previously, this is far from an exhaustive list; and further, no less important, examples would emerge from a more detailed assessment of Council activity in departments. Future work on progressing the Action Plan, including the proposed data strategy, would highlight other key areas. At this stage, we have been unable to identify any examples of the Council directly selling its data to companies or organisations for commercial purposes.

## **2. What are our responsibilities around data sharing?**

Information sharing is key to the delivery of public services, especially those that are co-ordinated around the needs of the individual. Sharing is essential to enable early intervention and prevention, for safeguarding and promoting welfare and for wider public protection. In addition, as local areas move towards partnership working and integrated services, professional and confident sharing of information is becoming more important to delivering the benefits of these new arrangements.

Whenever the Council needs to share information with external customers for particular purposes, it is usually essential for an agreement to be in place to stipulate what partners can and cannot do with the Council's information. An information sharing protocol (ISP) provides a framework for the secure and confidential obtaining, holding, recording, storing and sharing of information between participating partner agencies or organisations. It is an agreed set of principles about sharing personal or confidential information and it enables each organisation signed up to the protocol to understand the legal powers and circumstances in which it should share information and what its responsibilities are.

The Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) also provides a framework for organisations (directly concerned with the health, education, safety, and social well-being of people in Wales) who need to share information with each other. All Welsh local authorities, health boards and other organisations have signed up to work within the WASPI framework. It has been developed to support information sharing about individual people in a lawful and intelligent way; including for safeguarding, welfare and the protection of an individual; to prevent, detect or prosecute crime, or to collect taxation.

The Council, through its Information Governance Unit, ensures that it supports staff across departments to follow and discharge the necessary procedures and their responsibilities around data sharing. There is a responsibility to train staff on data sharing, and we have a mandatory data protection e-Learning training module which highlights the importance of sharing and protecting data including, for example, the standard procedure for reporting a data breach. The Council's Information Asset Register requires staff to identify what data we hold and share and the legal basis for processing the data. In addition, our privacy notice and statements set out to our customers what we will do with their data.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART  
ARWEINYDD/LEADER**