

WCC information procedure and standard for public surveys and consultations

This standard and procedure is one of the set of information policies, procedures and standards that are part of Warwickshire County Council's Information Governance framework. It is mandatory for all staff to follow this.

Procedures

A survey or consultation may look to be anonymous but you may be collecting items such as postcode, age, sex, gender and information that could identify people. We often ask for equality information. We often ask if the respondent if they wish to be contacted for follow-up, results or for entry into a prize draw. You may be conducting this internally or commissioning a third party to undertake this survey.

- There are restrictions on what survey software you can use.
- You should tell the audience what you are doing with the information collected by using a **privacy notice** on the survey. You must include a standard survey/consultation privacy notice and follow the privacy procedures.
- You should be aware that the results of surveys are subject to FOIA/EIR requests.
- If very complex and asking for personal information, you may need to conduct a **data protection impact assessment** to check these issues, the risks and get it approved, before you start.

Procedure for staff preparing surveys / consultations

1. Read the [Information Management guidance](#) first to establish if personal identifiable data is to be collected or truly anonymous and decide of which survey tool to use. Do not just use any tool that is available on the web, only ones approved for WCC use.
2. A privacy notice must be included on all paper and electronic surveys and consultations issued by Warwickshire County Council, in order to inform the public that when they respond; their views may be made available to a wider audience, how any personal data may be used and how long you intend to keep that data.

Procedure for staff preparing reports on consultations

1. When collating responses to a survey/consultation, this can include responses that have arrived online, by post (handwritten or typed) or by email that will include names and contact details for individuals. Please be aware of this privacy statement and our conformance to respect individual's privacy and requests for confidentiality.
2. You may be asked to release all responses for a committee to review or for a public request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). Correspondence that is scanned or saved should exclude any individual's personal details such as name, address, contact numbers, email by removing the information initially before scanning or redacting the electronic version to remove personal information. This would not apply where a person has responded on behalf of an organisation, e.g. a school, commercial, public sector or voluntary body.

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3. You should be aware that under FOIA/EIR there is a 'public interest test' that may be applied to override any concerns about releasing comments and this may include names of individuals. However, our policy is to be transparent and open, so the easiest solution is to make sure personal details are removed/redacted as the norm.
4. If any document is produced that contains such personal information, it must be treated as containing potentially confidential information and have a clear protective marking, and be handled according to WCC information security standards. It should only be shared on a limited basis and any copies given out or shared must be retrieved and shredded or deleted.

Privacy notices

If the consultation uses Ask Warwickshire then a specific privacy notice is available online at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy-ask

This privacy notice can be amended to fit the consultation to add extra information. Any major changes needs to be approved by Information Management.

Generic WCC standard privacy statement to be used on consultations

Following the end of the consultation we shall publish the results and this may include quotes of comments which will be anonymous. If you reply to an anonymous survey then no personal details will be captured.

If you volunteer to give us your name and contact details for a prize draw or to be notified on the results or to volunteer for a focus group, then these details will be kept securely but only used for these purposes.

Information you provide in any additional correspondence to our surveys and consultations, including personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and/or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA). If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential and not shared, including your contact details, please tell us why, but be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act, we cannot always guarantee confidentiality.

To see how we use your personal data and what your information rights are, please read our overall customer privacy notice at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy or contact our Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410.

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Examples of customised notices used on surveys and consultations

Depending on the size of the survey and if on paper or electronic the privacy notice can be changed to be concise to suit the survey and type of data collection

Anonymous online survey – no personal identifiable data collected

Following the end of the survey we shall publish the results and this may include quotes of comments which will be anonymous. If you reply to an anonymous survey then no personal details will be captured, and please do not provide any identifiable data in your comments.

If you would like further information, visit our website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy or contact our Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410

Survey and collection of age, gender, postcode for analysis to inform commissioning

The information/data collected by this survey will be kept strictly confidential and shared only with Warwickshire County Council staff responsible for analysis of the data and those responsible for the commissioning xxx services. All data will be stored securely and erased within four years.

All comments, feedback and information we receive will be used to inform how future xxx services are delivered. You will not, in any way, be identifiable in the survey analysis from your responses and any comments will be anonymous. The findings from the consultation will be presented to Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet, for their approval to commence a tender process for these services.

Please do not provide any additional correspondence to our surveys as personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and/or Environmental Information Regulations. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, including your contact details, please tell us why, but be aware that, under access legislation, we cannot always guarantee confidentiality.

For further information see www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy or contact our Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410.

Anonymous online survey but optional email address collection

Following the end of the survey we shall publish the results and this may include quotes of comments which will be anonymous. If you reply to an anonymous survey then no personal details will be captured.

If you volunteer to give us your email address to volunteer for a focus group/user testing group, then these details will be kept securely but only used for this purpose. We will keep your email address for a period of 12 months or for the duration of the project.

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If you would like further information, visit our website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/privacy or contact our Customer Service Centre on 01926 410410

Further advice

Information Management

informationmanagement@warwickshire.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Council

Staff website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/im

Public website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk