

The Local Council Data Protection Toolkit Service



Information Pack

Save time, reduce stress and avoid last-minute headaches. We'll guide and support your council on its journey to GDPR and Data Protection Act compliance, in time for the 2025/26 AGAR and well into the future.



**BREAKTHROUGH
COMMUNICATIONS**
SPECIALISTS IN CONNECTING COUNCILS WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

Hi there! It's great to meet you. We're Breakthrough Communications.

We help parish, town and community councils build trust through effective internal and external communications and meaningful community engagement, and to achieve robust compliance with UK GDPR and FOI requirements.



Breakthrough Communications helps local councils communicate and engage effectively with their communities, and to do so compliantly.

We're the UK's leading provider of communication, engagement and information compliance support for local councils.

Our expert team brings decades of combined experience in professional communications, community engagement, and GDPR/FOI information governance.

Many of our team have also served as councillors and clerks. So we not only understand the importance of effective engagement, communication and compliance, we also understand the unique world of parish and town councils.

Whatever your community engagement or information compliance needs, we're here to help and support you.

Council Hive Subscription for Councils

- Council Hive is a communications and compliance support service designed exclusively for local councils.
- Council Hive includes unlimited access to on-demand training, tools and toolkits, as well as 1-2-1 support covering all aspects of local council communications, engagement and GDPR/FOI compliance.

Done-for-you services

- Communication strategies, consultations and surveys, and other aspects of community engagement.
- Advice for UK GDPR/FOI matters, data protection compliance reviews, risk assessments and policy refreshes.

Training, Workshops and Events

- Virtual and in-person training and workshops covering all aspects of internal and external council communications, as well as UK GDPR and FOI compliance,

Call 01903 299000 or email hello@breakthroughcomms.co.uk

Meet just a few of the councils we've supported with data protection and information compliance...



View our profile on Trustpilot to see what Clerks, Officers and Councillors think about our services supporting councils with data protection, community engagement and communications

"Breakthrough Communications are really helpful, easy to get hold of and easy to talk to. The GDPR advice they give has been tested and stood up to that test. I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending them. We certainly feel a sense of comfort knowing they are available for any unexpected issues."

- Andy Curtis, CEO at Newquay Town Council



"I would 100% recommend Breakthrough Communications. Their data protection and FOI support has been invaluable and their team has been attentive and helpful every time."

- Steve Smith, Clerk at Wool Parish Council



We are rated "Excellent" by Councils, Clerks and Councillors across the country on Trustpilot



An Open Letter to Clerks, Council Officers and Local Councillors

Dear Local Council,

If there's one thing we hear more than anything else from the clerks and officers we work with, it's this: **there simply isn't enough time to do everything you have to do.**

Time to stay on top of ever-changing information compliance rules. Time to figure out which of it really applies to parish and town councils. Time to learn or refresh key skills. And now, there's something new to add to the list.

From the 2025/26 AGAR, parish and town councils must confirm their compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act.

This isn't optional, theoretical or a 'nice to have'. It's a legal declaration that should be underpinned by clear and comprehensive evidence.

That could mean refreshing outdated policies. Providing relevant training for staff and councillors. Mapping out the 'personal data' processed by the council, including what you hold, why you hold it, who has access, and your lawful basis for processing.

It could also involve conducting data protection risk assessments and ensuring all key documents and policies reflect how your council works today, and not how the council operated back in 2018 when GDPR first came into law.

That's why we've created the Local Council Data Protection Compliance Kit service.

It's designed to take the pressure off. Giving your council a clear, supported pathway to information compliance, with relevant tools and templates, step-by-step guidance, council-specific training, and year-round support through live clinics and events.

The benefits don't stop there. Information compliance doesn't stand still, and neither does your council. Your council is growing, taking on new services and assets. Breakthrough Communications is here to support your council on that journey.

You don't need more on your 'to do' list. You need the right tools at the right time, so compliance doesn't become a last-minute scramble. Join us today.

UK GDPR and Data Protection Act Compliance: What Councils need to know for the 2025/26 AGAR

From the 2025/26 AGAR, parish and town councils will be required to complete a new Assertion 10 as part of its Annual Governance Statement. This new requirement goes beyond the previous expectations bundled together under Assertion 3.

The 2025 Practitioners' Guide, issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) (formerly JPAG), sets out the requirements of Assertion 10.

Assertion 10 not only requires councils to use a council-owned email domain and to operate an accessible website in line with legal requirements, it also explicitly requires parish and town councils to:

- Comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Process personal data lawfully, fairly, and in line with UK GDPR principles
- Recognise their roles as both a Data Controller and a Data Processor

To credibly declare UK GDPR and Data Protection Act compliance, councils are advised to undertake activities such as data audits, staff training and policy reviews in line with sector guidance.

To sign off Assertion 10 with confidence, your council should have already taken steps during the current financial year.

For many councils, this may involve:

- **Carrying out council-wide audits** of 'personal data' your council processes, why you hold it, who has access, and your lawful basis for processing.
- **Risk assessing all of the personal data** processed by the council and identifying mitigations to reduce risk to the council and data subjects.
- **Having appropriate data protection and information compliance policies** in place that reflect how the council operates (not what it did in 2018)
- **Putting in place regular and relevant data protection training** for council staff and councillors

There's a lot of work to do, and yet for many councils, it can be a challenge to know where to start, or what to actually do to achieve compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act.

There's a lot to take care of, which is why acting now can help avoid unnecessary stress, frustration, and headaches further down the line.

Introducing the Local Council Data Protection Compliance Kit service, designed with your council in mind

We understand that your council is already busy. That's why our new toolkit service provides a supportive pathway to compliance, with guidance and clarity every step of the way.

Here's what's included:

- **On-demand, bitesize training** modules designed for clerks and council officers, comprehensively covering the journey to achieve council data protection compliance.
- **Brand new templates and resources** that can be customised and adapted to your council's needs.
- **A UK GDPR and Data Protection Compliance Checklist**, to track your council's progress to compliance.
- **Monthly Masterclasses** offering practical guidance on specific areas of council data protection compliance, such as CCTV, photography and videography at council events, councillors' use of personal data, use of personal devices, email lists, managing SAR and other UK GDPR requests, managing FOI and EIR, and more.
- **Regular 'drop-in' Clinics on Zoom** to troubleshoot issues and get answers

The Local Council Data Protection Toolkit Service launches in July 2025, and will usually cost councils £695+vat for 12 months' unlimited access.

If councils pre-register for the service by 30th June 2025, we will provide the first 12 months at a reduced cost of just £495+vat, saving your council £200.

We will also provide two additional bonuses to your council, if you pre-register by our deadline:

- 2x hours 1-2-1 professional advice or support on any UK GDPR, data protection or FOI compliance issue
- A UK GDPR and data protection compliance report for your council



RISK-FREE GUARANTEE

This new service comes with a 60-day money-back guarantee. If your council complete all of the training modules and attends at least one live clinic or masterclass, but is still not satisfied, we'll refund your council in full. No hassle, no risk.

Questions regarding the Local Council Data Protection Toolkit Service

Is this mandatory?

While our toolkit service is optional, the new Assertion 10 is not. Parish and town are now required to declare their UK GDPR compliance on next year's AGAR. Our toolkit service provides a supportive, guided pathway to help councils on their journey to information compliance.

We already have a privacy policy. Isn't that enough?

Data protection policies and other information compliance documents, such as a Privacy Notice, must reflect current council-specific practice, be actively followed, and regularly updated to align with the latest guidance, legislation and best practice. Out-of-date or 'off-the-shelf' policies are unlikely to reflect the unique way your council processes personal data. A great deal has changed since 2018, when GDPR first came in, including how your council operates and its areas of operation.

What happens if we wait until next spring?

Compliance involves having a clear sense of where your council is now, where it needs to be, and how to bridge the gap. Compliance can, therefore, take time. Waiting until Spring 2026 could put your council at risk, and as a result turn AGAR season into a scramble.

We don't think we process much in the way of personal data.

In the context of local councils, personal data can include a range of information such as staff records, councillor contact details, resident correspondence, planning objections, consultation and survey responses, live and recorded CCTV footage, photographs from council and community events, and details in allotment or burial registers. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

Even seemingly routine documents, such as GDPR and FOI requests, complaint emails or youth club sign-up forms, often contain identifiable personal information.

Why is the team at Breakthrough Communications best placed to help us?

Breakthrough Communications is the only organisation that provides data protection and information compliance advice to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), many County Associations, as well as directly to parish and town councils. Our team specialises exclusively in the parish and town council sector, combining expert knowledge of UK GDPR and FOI with a practical understanding of how councils operate, meaning that our guidance is always relevant, realistic and ready to use.

Let's get your council compliant

In addition to our new Local Council Data Protection Toolkit service, we also provide two other options for local councils seeking to achieve information compliance.

Bronze

The Local Council Data Protection Toolkit Service

Our new entry-level service focused solely on local council UK GDPR, data protection and FOI compliance ahead of the 2025/26 AGAR - and beyond.

- ✓ On-demand, bitesize training covering UK GDPR, data protection, Freedom of Information.
- ✓ New guidance, templates, resources and checklists to save you time and effort.
- ✓ Access to a programme of monthly live Masterclass events and all recordings.
- ✓ Live 'drop-in' clinics to discover best practice.
- ✓ Regular training events for staff and councillors, with certificates provided.
- ✓ **Two early-bird bonuses*:**
 - **2x hours 1-2-1 advice**
 - **Bespoke Local Council Compliance Report**

£695+vat
£495+vat*

[Register Now](#)

Silver

Our Council Hive Service for Local Councils

Our most popular service! Communications, community engagement, data protection and FOI advice, training and resources - all in one place.

- ✓ **Includes everything that's provided in our new Data Protection Toolkit Service**
- ✓ 24/7 access to the Council Hive Hub, giving clerks and officers access to training, resources, templates and live events covering all aspects of community engagement, council communications as well as UK GDPR and FOI information compliance.
- ✓ Unlimited 1-2-1 advice and support from our team of council communications, community engagement and UK GDPR and FOI compliance experts.
- ✓ Annual Council 'MOT'-style Healthchecks covering communications and information compliance
- ✓ 20% discount against the purchase of any of our done-for-you services.

£1997+vat
per annum

[Register Now](#)

Gold

Bespoke Data Protection Review Service

Our bespoke service for larger local councils. We'll do most of the hard work for you, and give you 12 months' access to Council Hive at no extra cost.

- ✓ We'll carry out a council-wide data map of all of the personal data in your council, including purpose, lawful basis and more.
- ✓ We'll risk assess your council's approach to data protection by carrying out a Data Protection Impact Assessment, identifying high areas of risk and supporting you to put in place mitigation measures.
- ✓ We'll refresh and, where necessary, create council data protection documents and policies, including an overarching Privacy Notice.
- ✓ We'll provide training for staff and councillors, either on Zoom or in-person.
- ✓ We'll give you 12 months' access to our Council Hive service, at no extra cost, including unlimited 1-2-1 advice and support.

Bespoke Council Quote Provided

[Book a Call Now](#)

**If your council pre-registers for*

Call 01903 299000 or email hello@breakthroughcomms.co.uk