

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Access to Information		
Directorate	Strategy & Performance		
Reporting to			
Grade	13		
Evaluation ref:	AG0874	Job ref:	Family RPG13
Role purpose			
<p>The Disclosure Officer is responsible for managing and processing all Data Protection requests for Somerset Council, ensuring compliance with statutory guidelines and deadlines. This role involves handling Data Subject Access Requests, Police Disclosure Requests, and various rights under data protection laws, such as rectification, erasure, and data portability. The postholder will liaise with partners to locate and obtain necessary files, assess requests against legislation, and ensure appropriate actions such as redaction and indexing. The role requires maintaining knowledge of relevant legislation, making judgements on exempt information, and working with third parties to facilitate information sharing. The postholder will also monitor requests to ensure deadlines are met, produce regular reports, and undertake ad-hoc projects as required. Effective communication and adherence to data security policies are crucial, as the role involves regular contact with the public, professional bodies, and council employees.</p>			
Accountabilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and process all Data Protection requests using iCasework. • Liaise with partners to locate and obtain scanned copies of files. • Develop and maintain knowledge of specialist systems to access electronic records. • Identify and handle contentious and complex cases with appropriate stakeholders. • Assess requests against legislation to ensure proper action is taken. • Maintain and develop knowledge of Data Protection and associated legislation. • Make judgements on exempt information and third-party disclosures. • Ensure processes and workflows in iCasework are efficient and consistent. • Monitor requests to ensure statutory deadlines are met and notify relevant parties of any issues. • Produce regular reports on the status of requests and compliance with deadlines. • Work with third parties to facilitate information sharing in line with legislation. • Undertake ad-hoc projects as required by management. • Uphold and promote the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies. 			
Knowledge / Experience / Skills			
		Essential	Desirable

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Knowledge		
Comprehensive understanding of Data Protection laws and regulations.	x	
Familiarity with legislation such as Sarah's Law, Clare's Law, and Freedom of Information.	x	
Awareness of data security policies and practices.	x	
Knowledge of iCasework or similar case management systems.		x
Understanding of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies.		x
Knowledge of information sharing protocols with professional bodies.		x
Experience		
Experience in managing Data Protection requests.	x	
Experience in liaising with professional bodies such as the Police and ICO.	x	
Experience in handling sensitive and confidential information.	x	
Previous experience in a similar role within a public sector organisation.		x
Experience in producing reports and monitoring compliance.		x
Experience in using case management systems.		x
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Relevant qualification in Data Protection or Information Governance.	x	
Training in data security and information management.	x	
Certification in Data Protection (e.g., GDPR).		x
Degree in a related field such as Law, Information Management, or Public Administration.		x
Professional membership in relevant bodies.		x
Continuous professional development in Data Protection.		x
Skills		
Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.	x	
Strong analytical and judgement skills.	x	
Ability to manage and prioritise multiple tasks effectively.	x	

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Strong interpersonal skills for dealing with the public and professional bodies.	x	
Attention to detail and accuracy in handling data.	x	
Proficiency in using case management systems.		x

Working Conditions

This role involves working within a dynamic and supportive local authority environment. Candidates should be prepared for the following conditions:

- **Work Hours:** Standard working hours are 37, with occasional requirements for evening or weekend work to meet project deadlines or attend community events.
- **Location:** The primary work location is County Hall, with opportunities for remote work as per organisational policies.
- **Travel:** Some travel within the local area may be required for meetings, site visits, and community engagement activities.
- **Work Environment:** The role involves working both independently and as part of a team, with access to modern office facilities and resources.
- **Health and Safety:** Adherence to all health and safety regulations is mandatory, ensuring a safe working environment for all employees.

Dimensions of the role

Contacts & Relationships

- Has regular contact with members of the public, who at times may be distressed or challenging. These contacts require tact and discretion, and the ability to explain sometimes complex situations in a way that can be readily understood by the public. The interactions can sometimes be confidential, personal and distressing.
- Regular contact with professional bodies such as the Police, Health, ICO, LGO, Coroner's Office amongst others, to facilitate and uphold data sharing (as required by law) and data subject rights.
- Regular contact with a wide range of council employees, particularly managers.
- Effective communication, both in writing, and on the telephone and excellent team working skills and abilities are required to ensure members of the public, partner organisations and colleagues are dealt with in a professional, focused, and efficient way.

Resources

The postholder requires an understanding of the importance of data security in relation to all documentation sent to third parties and to adhere to all SCC data security policies. Sensitive personal information must be managed with particular care when being sent by post, email or fax and when shared over the telephone and at meetings.

Provides the centre of excellence for the Council on all matters appertaining to the

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Data Protection Act, and other similar legislation.

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position .
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Corporate Accountabilities

Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.
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Date: 06.02.25