

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL
DISCLOSURE SECURITY POLICY

1. General Principles

Barnstaple Town Council uses the services of an umbrella organisation (PLCH) to access the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) disclosure service in order to assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust. The Town Council complies fully with relevant DBS Codes of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information. This is the Council's written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

2. Storage and Access

Disclosure information will not be kept on an individual's personal file although a record of the recruitment decision will be kept, either on the personal file (where an appointment is confirmed) or with the recruitment file for the post (where the appointment is not confirmed). Disclosures will be kept separately and securely in a lockable filing cabinet for a period of 6 months, after which they will be destroyed by shredding. Access will be strictly controlled and limited to the Town Clerk.

3. Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, disclosure information will only be passed to those staff in the Town Council who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties.

In relation to job applicants, Disclosure information will be shared for discussion with the relevant manager or councillors. A joint decision will then be made about the applicant or employee's future employment position, with reference to the Council's policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

In relation to volunteers, Disclosure information will be shared with the relevant manager responsible for confirming such recruitments.

All relevant staff and members of the Town Council recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information on to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

4. Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given. This includes disciplinary proceedings, which are considered to be part of the employment process.

5. Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant decision) has been made, the Town Council does not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes, complaints or disciplinary proceedings. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, the Town Council will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will be in place. Information will be destroyed by shredding.

No image or representation of the contents of a Disclosure will be made or kept after the Disclosure has been shredded, however, the Town Council will keep a record of the date of Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the Bureau and the recruitment decision. This information will be strictly controlled and limited to the Town Clerk.

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