

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION UPDATE

AGENDA ITEM No. 9

MEETING: **AUDIT, RISK AND GDPR SUB-COMMITTEE**

DATE: **5th MAY 2026**

REPORT BY: **CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the Council's compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

2.0 Current Situation

2.1 Work is ongoing regarding the implementation of a number of recommendations in relation to making the Council's information technology systems, and the personal data it processes, more secure. Part of this process includes attaining the nationally-recognised, government backed, IT security standard accreditation, Cyber Essentials, which helps an organisation protect itself against the most common online security threats.

2.2 In addition, a key new requirement relating to digital and data management has been added to the 'proper practices' for town and parish councils, as set out in the Practitioners' Guide issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP), to support the preparation of statutory annual accounting and governance statements by smaller authorities in England, which are found in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). These changes are now in effect.

2.3 Effectively, a new section, known as 'Assertion 10', has been added to the AGAR, setting out specific requirements around digital and data management, including a requirement for all councils to have a suitable IT policy, requirements around email management, website accessibility, freedom of information and transparency, and data protection and GDPR.

2.4 Officers have been working to ensure compliance with Assertion 10 throughout the year and are confident that the Council meets the requirements

2.5 All committee reports include a section on GDPR Implications and, where necessary, Privacy Impact Assessments are completed and included.

2.6 Data Protection Statements are included on any forms where personal data is being requested e.g. membership forms, applications forms etc, and where required displayed on notice boards.

2.7 All staff regularly review paper and electronic files to minimise the amount of personal data stored.

2.8 The Council's Data Protection (GDPR) Policy was updated and approved at the Policy and Resources Committee on 21st January 2026.

2.9 A data audit has been carried out in order to ascertain and document the types of data held by the Council, including the legal basis for processing the data, storage and retention detail.

- 2.10 Refresher training is in progress for all Council staff who process personal data.
- 2.11 Induction and refresher training relating to data protection was held for members in November 2025.
- 2.12 There have been no data protection issues or breaches in the period since the last meeting.

3.0 Impact on Great Aycliffe Town Council.

- 3.1 The implementation of a Data Protection (GDPR) Policy and Data Breach Policy and putting in place of procedures and actions to ensure compliance, helps demonstrate that the Council is complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

4.0 Policy Implications

- 4.1 Compliance with GDPR and effective management of data helps the Council in the delivery of the following Council Strategic Aims:

Aim 1 "To provide good quality governance and management of the Council".

Aim 2 "To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner".

5.0 Staffing Implications

- 5.1 Compliance with GDPR requirements is specifically included within the Job Descriptions and Contracts of Employment of all staff.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 None.

7.0 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 7.1 None.

8.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 The Town Council must ensure that information on GDPR is made widely available and is easy to access, read and understand.

9.0 Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change Implications

- 9.1 None.

10.0 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 It is not considered that the matters contained in this report pose a risk to health and safety of staff or to the financial or public standing of the Council to a degree that a risk assessment should be appended to this report.

11.0 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- 11.1 Is any personal or sensitive data required for this proposal which may have any implications for GDPR? **NO**

12.0 Recommendation

- 12.1 It is recommended that Members consider and receive the report.

Corporate Management Team