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One Minute Guide:

Document Security

What is document security?

Communications within and outside of the Council are now virtually all via e-mail. When letters or other documents are sent, these are usually in the form of attachments. It is essential in relation to our responsibilities under Data Protection and the reputation of the Council that we send documents securely and this includes securing the contents.

Why is it important?

It is important that the contents of attachments are secure and can't be altered to avoid unauthorised and inappropriate changes being made, and to protect the Council logo and electronic signatures from being used in a fraudulent manner. This applies to all documents, but key examples are: responses to complaints where alterations could be made to decisions; Freedom of Information returns where changes could affect Council integrity and reputation as the responses are published; staff employment references which could be changed affecting safer recruitment etc.

How can I ensure that documents I send outside of the Local Authority are safe?

Staff are responsible for the manner in which they send information. All attachments, that state the position of the Council on a particular matter should be sent out in PDF (Portable Document Format) which provides a layer of security. All staff have the ability to save documents in this format by file, save as type and selecting PDF from the drop down options.

Documents can be also be protected via a password as "read only" using "Restrict Editing", under the "Review" tab in Outlook.

How can I find out more?

Security of documents is only a small part of Information Governance. There is an abundance of information on [Information Governance](#) on the Intranet including helpful sections such as [Information Security - 10 Golden Rules](#) and what to do if there is an [Information Security Incident](#).

Staff are also recommended to attend an hour long Information Governance Summer Seminar, which are taking place on several dates across September. For more information, please contact Information.Governance@redbridge.gov.uk.

There are two courses, relating to information governance on [Learning Zone](#), the Council's web-based e learning system, which are mandatory for staff. These are the [Introduction to Information Security](#) course and the course on the [Data Protection Act 1998](#). Permanent staff have free access to Learning Zone. There is a small charge for agency staff.

Who can I contact for advice and support?

For support using ICT, please contact the ICT Service Desk via ict.servicedesk@redbridge.gov.uk, on 020 8708 4455 or via [ICT training](#).