

Gloucestershire County Council Reponse

Thank you for the opportunity to reply. Gloucestershire County Council supports the response made by the County Councils Network. In addition, we would like to respond to the wider points of principle and highlight some specific concerns.

Gloucestershire County Council welcomes the extension of greater openness and transparency to the wider public sector. (Question 1 and 4, page 6).

When proactively publishing more data, there needs to be a balance between timeliness and accuracy. It is important that public bodies have time to ensure that data is of sufficient quality before publication to ensure that wrong decisions are not made, public trust is not undermined and reputations lost. (Question 5 on page 32).

It should not be under-estimated how much time it takes to redact personal information before publishing some data. This could represent a significant additional burden on public bodies. Even where one makes it clear that the data will be made public, it is sometimes necessary to redact personal information supplied, particularly where it is possible to identify the vulnerable (e.g consultations about changes to service provision). (Question 3 and 4 on page 25).

FOI is used by several people and organisations in a way that was not intended by the legislation. Removing the 18 hour time limit in such circumstances would not represent good use of taxpayer's money. (Question 4 on page 25 and point 4 on page 23).