



Reference: FOI-230

**Request:**

1. What is the time period for Councillors to respond to questions, queries and requests for information received from residents of North Tyneside?
2. Are councillors allowed to use their personal email address to respond to residents when responding in relation to council business and/ or on behalf of the council?
3. How are councillors expected to manage correspondence from residents, e.g., do they have to use a filing or management system, or length of time that correspondence has to be retained for?
4. Do councillors have to comply with GDPR?

**Response:**

1. Response timeframes are built into the council's electronic Member Enquiry case management system. Timeframes within this system, are to ensure the timely provision of information and enquiry response by council officers. Enquiries registered on the system need to be responded to or placed on 'outstanding works' to allow investigation. Either of these actions need to be carried out by officers within 8 working days. There are no defined timeframes for response to enquiries that are placed on outstanding works as responses will depend on the type and complexity of the enquiry.
2. Councillors are asked and encouraged to use council email addresses. Some Councillors do choose to use their personal email addresses. Part 8.7 of the council's constitution provides the protocol for the use of Authority resources and support for Members as well as ICT computer security policy which covers the use of email communications.
3. There is an electronic case management system for registration and progression of enquiries. Use of the system is optional, and Members may wish to manage correspondence and enquiries independently. Retention of information is in line with the Authorities retention guidelines.
4. Members are classed as 'data controllers' in their own right, and it is their responsibility to comply with the necessary data protection legislation. All Members undertake mandatory information governance and ICT security training which is refreshed on a regular basis.

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