

Disclosure of Information Policy

PURPOSE

To provide the basis on which information is provided to members of the public, community groups commercial operators and other government bodies. It is recognised that data collected and held by the City of Launceston is a strategic resource that can be used for the benefit of the public. Publishing data stimulates innovation, engagement and creates opportunities for government, business, education and research. The basis of provision of information should be that all information is available or accessible to the public unless it contains Sensitive Information. This approach endeavours to provide transparency to the municipality for the operation of the City of Launceston and supports its obligations under the *Right to information Act 2009*.

DEFINITIONS

Sensitive Information - Sensitive information includes personal information as per the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* or information that is protected/partially protected under the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

Personal Information - is Information or opinion relating to an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association, membership of a trade union, sexual preferences or practices, criminal record, health information and financial status or otherwise defined by the

Non-Sensitive Information - is any information that does not include Sensitive Information.

Commercial Entity - may include a legal entity created under state or commonwealth legislation that has a commercial aspect to its operation in part or whole, this does not include government entities.

SCOPE:

The City of Launceston commits to release of information including non-sensitive and sensitive information where appropriate. Non-sensitive information should be released upon request to any person or legal entity with the exception of a Commercial Entity. The decision to release of information to a commercial entity should be made by the Manager of the respective department.

A key aspect of this policy is to provide for the basis of release of open data as by default and to collaborate with the private and research sectors to extend the value of public data for the benefit of the community. Where possible and as resourcing allows City of Launceston will publish anonymised data on data.gov.au and under the latest Creative Commons licence.

POLICY:

Provision of information

- Non-Sensitive Information can be released by providing the information to the person upon request.
- In instances where there is information that is Sensitive Information but the Sensitive Information can reasonably be removed, the relevant Team Leader may approve the removal and subsequent release. This is conditional on compliance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*, in particular schedule 1 Personal Information Protection Principles.
- All policies, procedures and published documents produced and approved shall be available for the use and adaptation by any organisation under the latest Creative Commons Licence with the exception of Commercial Entities. The City of Launceston bears no responsibility legal or otherwise in the use or adaption of its policies, procedures and published documents.

Open Data

- Make non-sensitive data open by default to contribute to greater innovation and productivity improvements across all sectors of the economy.
- Make high-value data available for use by the public, industry and academia, in a manner that is enduring and frequently updated using high quality standards.
- The General Manager of the area of the data to agree qualifying data for publishing.
- Only charge for specialised data services to commercial entities as decided by the relevant manager and, where possible, publish the resulting data open by default.
- Build partnerships with the public, private and research sectors to build collective expertise and to find new ways to leverage public data for social and economic benefit.
- Securely share data between Government entities to improve efficiencies, and inform policy development and decision-making.
- Engage openly with the Tasmanian Government to share and integrate data to improve efficiencies and reduce duplication.
- Ensure all new systems support discoverability, interoperability, data and information accessibility and cost-effective access to facilitate access to data.
- Where possible, make data available with free, easy to use, high quality and reliable Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).

PRINCIPLES:

City of Launceston's Disclosure of Information Policy aligns with the *Right to Information Act 2009*, *Personal information Protection act 2004*, The Australian Governments Public Data Policy Statement and the International Open Data Charter which is underpinned by six principles:

1. Open by default
2. Timely and comprehensive
3. Accessible and usable
4. Comparable and interoperable
5. For improved governance and citizen engagement
6. For inclusive development and innovation

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

Personal Information Protection Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION:

Right to Information Act 2009

Personal Information Protection Act 2004

REFERENCES:

Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency <https://www.dta.gov.au/>

Tasmanian Government Open Data Policy

https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/490143/Tasmanian_Government_Open_Data_Policy_2016_2.pdf

Australian Government Public Data Policy Statement

https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/aust_govt_public_data_policy_statement_1.pdf

Open Knowledge Foundation <https://okfn.org/>

Open Data Charter <https://opendatacharter.net/>

REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed no more than 4 years after the date of approval (version) or more frequently, if dictated by operational demands and with Council's approval.