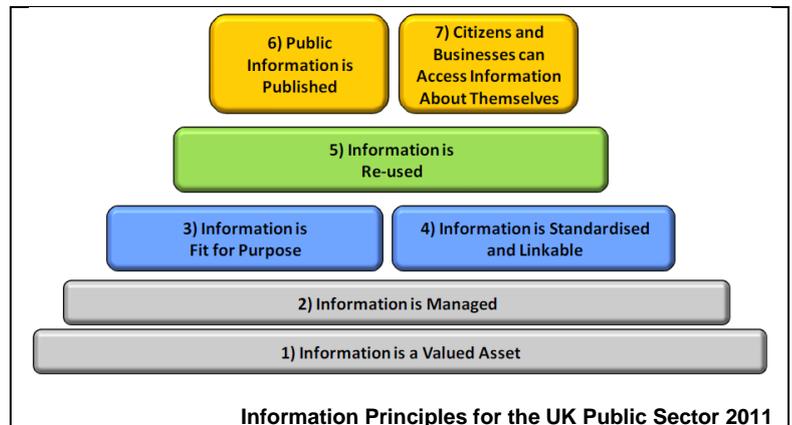| Title	Using information volunteered from People and Organisations about themselves.
Revision	1
Status	Draft
Date	2nd March 2012
Author	Paul Davidson, LeGSB Director of Standards, and CIO Sedgemoor District Council
Purpose	To propose an approach to using information that is volunteered from People and Organisations about themselves.
Type	LeGSB White Paper
Subject	ipsv - 1526-Information management

Revision	Date	Author	Notes
1	01/03/2012	Paul Davidson, for LeGSB	

This document

1. This LeGSB[1] White Paper proposes an approach to using information that is volunteered from People and Organisations about themselves, when providing public services.

Background

2. It has often been demonstrated that the public find that they are continually asked to provide the same information about themselves and their household, to many organisations, as they apply for public sector services.

3. Public sector organisations use this information to determine eligibility for services and make calculations for awards and so on. Consequently, information provided directly by the public often needs to be verified before a service can be provided.

4. The degree to which a public sector organisation needs to be certain of the correctness of data, is dependent upon the consequences of making the wrong determination. Public sector organisations therefore consider a balance between the risk of providing a service inappropriately, against the costs and time required, when setting the level of verification required on customer provided information.

5. When a piece of customer volunteered data has been verified and used to provide a public sector service, it does not follow that that person can expect to apply for another service, and find that the verified data is re-used. More likely, the volunteered information will be re-verified.

6. A deliverable from the Government ICT Strategy[2] (March 2011) has been a set of 'Information Principles for the UK Public Sector'[3]. The final principle emphasises that "Citizens and Businesses can access information about themselves". They should be able to see how that information has been used, and should be able to correct it if it is inaccurate or out-of-date.

Information Principles for the UK Public Sector 2011

7. The principle proposes that "*such information should be considered as belonging to the citizen, although entrusted to the care of a public body*".

---

[1] https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/localgovernmentstandardsbody
[2] http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/uk-government-ict-strategy-resources
[3] http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Information_Principles_UK_Public_Sector_final.pdf

Giving people and organisations control of their own information

8. Some of these problems and inconveniences could be reduced if:

• people or organisations can choose to record and maintain information that they want the public sector to use when applying for services;
• there is a choice of secure repositories for this type of information;
• those repositories are able to use authentication facilities that are already in use and trusted;
• as a person or organisation applies for a public sector service, they can control which parts of their volunteered data they consent to being used;
• public sector organisations can see what data has been verified by which organisations to what level of certainty;
• public sector organisations can add further data about the outcomes of their services such as awards. A person of organisation can then choose to provide their consent to further sharing that information when applying for further services.
• people and organisations can track where the public sector has used, or shared their data

9. As well as security and information governance standards, some data standards are necessary to enable this information to join up and flow securely, including:

• lists of 'public sector organisations' and the types of services that they provide;
• data Items that a person or business can volunteer.
• levels of data verification;
• data quality definitions.