

Name of meeting: Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 24 November 2023

Title of report: Annual Report: Information Governance 2022-2023

Purpose of report:

The report provides an update on the Information Governance service and offer to the Council, outlining key events and activities across the year. The report focuses on four key areas; organisational culture change, compliance, records of processing activity (RoPA), and records management before examining the challenges, successes and next steps.

This report is for information and comment.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £500k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? Decisions having a particularly significant effect on a single ward may also be treated as if they were key decisions.	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?	Key Decision – No Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Rachel Spencer Henshall -14 th November 2023 Isabel Brittain -14 th November 2023 Julie Muscroft, (Monitoring Officer)- 14 th November 2023
Cabinet member <u>portfolio</u>	Paul Davies – Deputy Leader and Corporate

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. **Summary**

Information governance connects all the relevant standards, requirements and best practice for appropriate and legal information handling. This allows the Council to manage information in an appropriate way that balances the importance of maintaining confidentiality and privacy for individuals, whilst ensuring openness and transparency for the organisation. The Information Governance Board hold the IG Team and their practices to account, ensuring that personal data is processed to the highest standard and in line with legislation.

Information is a vital asset to Kirklees Council to ensure the successful delivery of services and the efficient management of resources. It is important to ensure that information is effectively managed, and that appropriate policies and practices are in place, ensuring that statutory obligations can be met.

Effective information governance practices allow the Council and its employees to ensure that both business and personal information is dealt with legally, securely, efficiently, and effectively to enable the delivery of services.

The Information Governance Annual Report for 2022/2023 sets out how the Council has performed in key areas; Organisational Culture Change, Legal Compliance, Records of Processing Activity (RoPA) and, Records Management.

Highlighted are the challenges and achievements throughout the year including:

Challenges

- Subject Access Requests (SARs) backlog
- IG Team resources
- Demand from other services for advice and support
- Significant projects and areas of work outstanding requiring continued work

Achievements

- Resourcing
- SARs backlog reduction
- Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) Submission
- Training and development

2. **Information required to take a decision**

This report is for information only.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People**

This report outlines how the council has performed in meeting statutory timescales for responding to information requests including Freedom of Information (FOI), Environmental Information Request (EIR) and data subjects' rights requests.

3.2 Working with Partners

This report outlines how the council have worked with partners to support both parties in achieving information related outcomes.

3.3 Place Based Working

None.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

None.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

This report outlines the performance of requests for personal information made to the council, including by care leavers, relating to their time in care.

3.6 Financial Implications for the people living or working in Kirklees

None.

3.7 Other (eg Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)/Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

The Council is required by law to adhere to:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 1998

This report does not raise any legal implications.

4. Consultation

This report is for information only. It has been presented at the Councils Executive Leadership team and to the Executive Board for information.

5. Engagement

This report is for information only.

6. Next steps and timelines

It is important that the Council continues to have a strategic approach to information governance that ensures legislative compliance whilst realising the opportunities and benefits of best practice.

The learning from this report has informed the priorities for the coming year and beyond. Working in triangulation with colleagues in Data & Insight and IT Teams, a strategic approach to data management across all services can be achieved.

This report outlines next steps and future plans for information governance in service and across the Council, supporting compliance and service delivery. Priorities include:

- Continuing to reduce the SARs backlog,
- Improve efficiencies within the IG Team,
- Develop and deliver a communications plan,
- Work with triangular colleagues (IT and Data & Insight) to deliver a strategic and co-ordinated approach to data management,
- Update mandatory training packages,
- Roll out the Modernisation of Children's Records Project,
- RoPA development project.

The IG Board received quarterly reports regarding compliance, outlining areas of success, challenge and learning to support future practices. The IG Board is aware of the outlined next steps and is supportive of the IG Team carrying out these actions to help manage, reduce, and mitigate the challenges previously faced.

Compliance with subject access requests is a key area of focus. Many requests deemed complex and currently being added to the backlog are from care leavers wanting to know more about their time in and out of care. It has been realised that there is currently little support for such individuals and the information they receive could be traumatic for them. Therefore, in collaboration with Children's Services, a person-centred approach to such requests is to be scoped. The aim is to provide support to care leavers receiving information but also working with them at the point of making a SAR to potentially reduce the scope of the request.

The Modernisation of Children's Records Project will also support the reduction of the SARs backlog by digitising children's care records currently held in the central archive, making them more accessible for redaction at the time of need. Digitising records will also support recovery plans in the event of any disaster that may destroy paper files.

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

It is recommended that the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee note and comment on the Information Governance Annual Report and that the proposed actions are enacted and kept under review.

The Information Governance Board would be grateful for any comments from members on the contents of the report and suggestions for what items members would find useful for inclusion in future reports.

8. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

XXX

9. Contact officer

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10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

None

11. Service Director responsible

Julie Muscroft – Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning