

REPORT TITLE: Annual Report: Information Governance 2023-2024

Meeting:	Corporate Governance and Audit Committee
Date:	27 September 2024
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Councillor Tyler Hawkins
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No
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 compliance, both statutory and best practice, as well as examining the challenges faced, our successes and next steps.	
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved training, guidance and communications around statutory compliance areas to improve overall compliance. Reasons for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to meet statutory compliance requirements could result in ICO enforcement action which could carry a financial penalty and would cause significant reputational damage. 	
Resource Implications: Improving compliance will require increased resource/support within services, particularly in service areas that receive increased volumes of requests.	
Date signed off by <u>Executive 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 and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources Corporate Strategy and Public Health SLT, 25 April 2024 Isabel Brittain / Kevin Mulvaney Corporate Strategy and Public Health SLT, 25 April 2024 Samantha Lawton 13 September 2024

Electoral wards affected: All
Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive 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 2023-2024 sets out how the Council has performed in key areas; Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR), Data Subject's rights requests (including SARs), information security incidents and mandatory training compliance.

2. Information required to take a decision

This report is for information only.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

This report outlines how Kirklees Council has performed in meeting statutory timescales for responding to information requests, ensuring transparency with the public.

3.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

3.3 Legal Implications

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.

3.8 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

There are no other implications to highlight.

4. Consultation

This report is for information only and has previously been presented at the Executive Leadership Team meeting (30 April 2024).

5. Engagement

This report is for information only.

6. Options

6.1 Options considered

This report is for information only.

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

This report is for information only.

7. 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.

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 with the aim of reducing the number of complex cases outstanding,
- Continue to examine the effective use of resources within the IG Team to improve compliance, better support services and improve efficiencies,
- Support services and Councillors to support themselves by offering further specialist training and guidance.

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.

8. Contact officer

Erin Wood – Information Governance Manager & Data Protection Officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Not applicable.

10. Appendices

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11. Service Director responsible

Samantha Lawton – Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning