

**Audit & Governance Committee –
April 2016**



**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT &
GOVERNANCE STRATEGY**

Report of the ICT & Transformation Manager

Lead Member Internal Services – Councillor Lis

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of Audit & Governance for:
The Information Management & Governance Strategy and associated delivery plan.

2. Recommendations

Audit & Governance Committee is invited to:

- 2.1 Approve adoption of the Information Management & Governance Strategy along with the aims and standards defined therein as set out at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Approve adoption of the Information Management & Governance Delivery Plan along with the approach and outcomes defined therein as set out at Appendix 2.

3. Background Information (Optional)

- 3.1 Information is a vital asset for the Council, supporting both day to day operations and the effective management of services and resources. Information is also important in regard to improvements to service delivery and how the Council is able to respond to changing customer needs and demands. The Council is furthermore in a position of trust, holding on to personal and sensitive information from individuals. Therefore it is essential that all Council information is managed effectively within robust governance arrangements aligned to a corporately adopted strategy.
- 3.2 Within recent years it has been increasingly recognised by many organisations, including local authorities, that there is a need to have robust data protection practices in place. This is not only to ensure that data is handled and processed to high standards to comply with the Data Protection Act and to deliver excellent services to customers, but to avoid significant

monetary penalties which can be imposed if data breaches occur.

3.3 'Information Management & Governance' describes the approach within which accountability, standards, policies and procedures are developed, implemented and maintained to ensure that all types of information used by the Council are sourced, held and used appropriately, securely and legally.

3.4 Information Management & Governance is relevant to all staff and elected Members and it is essential that officers are aware of their responsibilities and that information governance and data security are embedded appropriately in the Council's culture, the information Management & Governance Strategy and associated delivery plan sets out to achieve this aim.

4. The Report

4.1 The Information Management & Governance Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out the Council's strategy for Information Management and Governance for the period from 2016 to 2018. It complements and is aligned with the separate ICT Strategy. It should be read in conjunction with the related Delivery Plan, which sets out how the Strategy will be implemented.

4.2 The Information Management & Governance Strategy Delivery Plan (Appendix 2) demonstrates the means of implementing the Strategy's six Strategic Themes and the ten detailed objectives of the Strategy.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial and Value for Money Implications

Aside from encouraging a more professional approach, greater control and improvements in information governance can potentially save staff time, for example in the development of standard responses for requests for information. More efficient and secure handling of information, particularly personal data, can avoid the risks inherent in causing breaches of the data protection legislation.

More serious breaches can result in intervention by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) that can take enforcement action against a data controller, which aside from possible significant monetary penalties, is both disruptive to an organisation, and inevitably causes reputational damage. In addition, implementing and complying with clear desk policies can better safeguard important valuable assets, such as laptop computers, particularly in office environments to which other organisations have unrestricted access. An improved culture of awareness by staff will undoubtedly strengthen the Council's resilience.

It should be recognised that maintaining appropriate Information Management & Governance arrangements requires commitment to maintain the role of Information Governance Officer, this role has already been budgeted for within existing resources.

5.2 **Legal implications**

As a registered data controller, the Council is required by law to have in place appropriate arrangements to ensure that personal data is collected, used and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This includes processes in place to ensure proper governance and compliance, and policies that describe arrangements for security, transparency, sharing of information, and responding to information requests.

5.3 **Contribution to Council Priorities**

Improvements in the management of information across the Council's activities potentially support the delivery of all of the Council's priorities. Significant incidents involving the mismanagement of information, losses or thefts, can be enormously embarrassing for public sector organisations. The fallout and recovery from incidents can be very disruptive on an organisation's ability to focus on core business activities, and can cause lasting reputational damage, as well as draining valuable resources from priority areas.

5.4 **Risk Management**

Staff should be made aware of their responsibilities to support the Council's obligations, and a regular programme of refresher training should be in place. Without the consistent application of these controls, the Council runs the risk of complaints from individual data subjects, enforcement action by the ICO, criticism from elected members, and adverse local and national publicity.

5.5 **Equality Impact Assessment**

The Council's Equality Impact Assessment Procedure **has been** followed. An Equality Impact Assessment **has not** been completed on the proposals as completion of **Stage 1- Initial Screening** of the Procedure identified that the proposed policy, strategy, procedure or function **does not have** the potential to cause negative impact or discriminate against different groups in the community based on •age • disability •gender • race/ethnicity • religion or religious belief (faith) •sexual orientation, or • rural isolation.

6. **Consultations with Others**

A number of senior officers have been consulted in the process of preparing this strategy, and the strategy directly addresses a recommendation of the Audit & Governance committee.

7. **Access to Information : Background Documents**

Data Protection Act 1998

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Local Government Data Handling Guidelines (2008)

The Local Public Services Data Handling Guidelines (2012)

Information Commissioner's Office's (ICO) letter to all local authorities to improve data protection (2013)

ICO's Audit findings from visits to Local Authorities (2014)

The Transparency Code (2015)

8. Author of the Report

Darren Maycock, ICT & Transformation Manager, Email: dmaycock@cravenc.gov.uk, Telephone: 01756 706270

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Information Management & Governance Strategy

Appendix 2 – Information Management & Governance Delivery Plan