AUDIT COMMITTEE
4 NOVEMBER 2024

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1.   The Systems and Information Governance Group (SIGG) is required to report six monthly to the Audit Committee on progress and planned developments of the information governance programme.

Summary

2.   The ongoing delivery of our information governance programme continues to provide the assurance required to reduce our information risks to an acceptable level.

3.   Recent/Ongoing work includes:

(a) The Microsoft Office 365 Programme.

(b) ICT work plan.

(c) Web Team work plan.

(d) Systems and Process Team work plan.

(e) Information Governance Team Work Plan.

(f)   Data Security and Protection (DSP) Toolkit.

(g) Work to achieve our target for the completion of on-line mandatory information governance training courses.

4.   The area of highest priority in the information governance programme is:

(a) The Microsoft Office 365 Programme.

Recommendation

5.   It is recommended that progress on the implementation of the Information Governance Programme be noted.

Reason

6.   To provide the Audit Committee with a status report on the delivery of the Council's Information Governance Programme.

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Executive Director of Resources and Governance

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Background Papers

Council Plan	There is no specific relevance to the strategy beyond a reflection on the Council's governance arrangements.
Addressing inequalities	There is no direct impact
Tackling Climate Change	This report is for information to members and requires no decision. Therefore there are no issues in relation to Carbon Impact and Climate Change.
Efficient and effective use of resources	Implementation of effective information governance systems and procedures has a positive impact on efficiency.
Health and Wellbeing	This report is for information to members and requires no decision. Therefore there are no issues in relation to Health and Well Being.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific issues which relate to crime and disorder
Wards Affected	All wards are affected equally
Groups Affected	This report is for information to members and requires no decision. Therefore there is no impact on any particular group.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend any changes to the Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	There is no specific impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Background

7. Delivery of our information governance programme has provided the assurance required to reduce our information risks to an acceptable level. While that is the case it must be recognised that the data processing activities of the Council continually evolve and must be kept under review. The processes implemented by the Council include review mechanisms to ensure this takes place.

The Microsoft Office 365 Programme

8. The Microsoft Office 365 Programme Team is comprised of the Systems Strategy and Development Manager, the Complaints and Information Governance Manager, the ICT Solutions Architects and the ICT Security and Assurance Team Leader and the End User Engagement Team and reports to SIGG. We have also recently recruited a Systems and Process Officer (SPO) who will assist the above team in driving this forward.

9. Following the successful migration of services who volunteered to migrate to Microsoft 365, we now have a significant number of teams who are fully operational through a Microsoft (MS) Teams interface. However, there remains a significant piece of work to do to and over the coming months we intend to migrate the rest of the Council's services to Microsoft 365. This work will be carried out by the new SPO who will be meeting with services to enable a smooth transfer into the new 365 world.

10. In addition to the services now using MS Teams as their primary working area, there are several Functional and Project Teams being used to conduct business across the Local Authority, including with partners. We have recently decommissioned the secure file sharing system, Egress. We are now providing that functionality via MS Teams, saving on license costs.

11. It is vital all Council services are migrated to Microsoft 365, to enable officers to collaborate remotely, work in innovative ways and utilise the plethora of applications within Microsoft 365 to improve productivity. The need to migrate services to Microsoft 365 is also becoming increasingly necessary from an information security perspective and as we start to explore the potential use of Microsoft Co-pilot, Microsoft's AI tool.

ICT work plan

12. SIGG also oversees the Council's ICT work programme, a summary of which is contained in the ICT Strategy - Implementation Progress report to Audit Committee.

Web Team work plan

13. Work on the darlington.gov.uk migration was resumed in late May, this project is expected to take until spring 2025 to complete and is now the team's main focus. The basic

template and content management is now in place alongside the simpler custom features. Work is now starting on the more complex integrations.

14. Development on the Hopetown Darlington website is complete. Since going live we've had a steady stream of new feature requests and enhancements. These are currently being handled via the usual helpdesk route where time allows.

Systems and Process Team work plan

15. The Systems and Process Team are the custodians of the large corporate applications that administer the Council's business across Social Care, Education, Customer Services, all online payments, Waste Management, Building Services, Street Cleansing, Planning, Anti-Social Behaviour, Building Control, Trading Standards and Licensing. The work plan covers all major upgrades to these systems (including the intensive testing regime needed to support this).

16. The team are working in Adult Services to align the Transformation Team Programme with the System Programme, a new program of works has been drawn up and we are slowly working through each item. Ongoing work also includes looking at a system to digitalise care records within the reablement team and Holicote. Grants have been received to fund 50% of the cost within the first year. We are also carrying out research into portals which are available to the service to enable more streamlined delivery of services between us and 3rd parties.

17. Children's Services work continues with the main focus still being on Fostering. The team are working closely with the transformation programme manager to implement more streamline services when working with carers. The new payment scheme has been implemented for our foster carers, and the system also underwent a major upgrade in October 2024, which brought in a number of enhancements.

18. The Education system is now part of a much wider programme that will see it wholly replaced in 2025. Stage one of the Education system is now live alongside two out of four portals – Admissions and Establishment. The 3rd portal which will enable parents to apply for an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan for their child was due to soft launch with four school/nurseries in September 2024, however this has been delayed due to a system issue. Stage two was due to commence in 2024, however, this has been rescheduled to 2025 due to System C re-designing their finance module. This is an integral part of this stage and is yet to be released to customers, meaning there could be further delays. This is being monitored and factored in. School admission applications opened for the second time using the new system in September 2024 and saw a large influx of applications on its first day of opening.

19. The development of the Customer Strategy is supported by the Verint work programme (Verint is the Councils CRM System) where forms are developed to allow a seamless digital

interaction for the customer and a safe and secure payment option. Additional services will continue to come on board with an online form offering, this is a project where we continue to work with those that want to offer an online form option as well as continuous promotion of existing forms to increase a higher digital presence. Verint underwent a major upgrade in April which has brought us up to date and inline with their upgrade path.

20. Over the coming months, we will be updating out mapping programme and tools, this is a large scale project which will see the systems team working with services to ensure that the layers used are updated and migrated over to the new platform successfully prior to us moving over to the Pro version of the product.

Information Governance Team Work Plan

21. The Council's Complaints and Information Governance Team/The Data Protection Officer continues to provide advice to officers on a range of data protection and information rights matters and ensures information rights requests are handled in accordance with UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR); The Data Protection Act 2018; The Freedom of Information Act 2000; and The Environmental Information Regulations 2014.

22. Since the last report to Audit Committee the team has also advised on a number of contracts including, AV1 - No Isolator, Mailinator – USA and the Legal Case Management System; a number of data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) including, AV1 – No Isolator, Rapid Deployment Mobile CCTV Cameras and Children's Services / Legal Research Project; and a number of data sharing agreements including, the Community Safety Partnership Information Sharing Protocol, Nebula Labs - virtual memory box and For Baby's Sake.

23. The Team are scanning the horizon in relation to the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill. The Bill is reaching the end of its passage through Parliament, is now at Committee Stage in the House of Lords and could receive Royal Assent this year.

Data Security and Protection (DSP) Toolkit

24. The DSP Toolkit is an online self-assessment tool that allows organisations to measure their performance against the National Data Guardian's 10 data security standards. All organisations that have access to NHS patient data and systems must use the toolkit to provide assurance that they are practising good data security and that personal information is handled correctly.

25. The Information Management Team has published the Council's submission for 2023/24. The Council's DSP Toolkit status of Standards Met is now publicly available for service users, commissioners, partner organisations and the public at Organisation Search (dsptoolkit.nhs.uk)

Training and awareness

26. The revised table in Appendix 1 shows the position on 23 October 2024 regarding the completion of the mandatory on-line information governance courses for Academy 10 and

where applicable, non-IT users. Completion rates of over 95% remains the Council's target and represents an acceptable level of take up which must be achieved.

27. The overall completion rate for the Employee's Guide to Information Security currently stands at 89%, an increase from the 85% reported to April's Audit Committee. This course is subject to a two year renewal, the course is not applicable to non-IT users.

28. In relation to the Social Media Module, completion rates currently stand at 78% overall, 92% for Academy 10 users and 34% for non-IT users. This compares to the 72% overall, 84% for Academy 10 users and 30% for non-IT users, reported to April's Audit Committee.

29. In relation to the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, overall completion rates are at 76%, 87% for Academy 10 users and 43% for non-IT users. This compares to the 70% overall completion rate, 80% for Academy 10 users and 41% for non-IT users, reported to April's Audit Committee.

30. While a significant number of officers have undertaken this training previously, following the introduction of two year expiry periods in relation to all three modules, they are now required to complete it again. As notifications are sent to those officers who need to refresh their training we anticipate an upturn in completion rates. This is done directly via reminder e-mails sent from Academy 10 and the weekly staff Briefing. With regards to completion rates for non-IT users, the simplified tool box talk style modules are still being used for Social Media and Data Protection. These modules have been designed for managers to be able to deliver the sessions faster, while still imparting all the key information with reinforced learning at the end of the sessions.

Conclusion

31. The Council's information governance programme continues to address emerging issues, support compliance with data protection legislation and manage the Council's information risks to an acceptable level.

Outcome of Consultation

32. No formal consultation was undertaken in production of this report.

Appendix 1

23/10/2024	Employee Guide to Information Security not applicable to hard copy	Social Media Version 3 - New in 2020	Data Protection 2018
Chief Executives & Economic Growth Total	84	91	82
Darlington Partnership	100	100	67
Economic Growth	89	91	82
Operations Group Total	92	97	96
Housing and Revenues	97	97	96
Law & Governance	96	96	96
Resources	95	95	95
Strategy Performance and Communications	100	100	97
People Group Total	89	84	78
Adult Social Care	85	88	83
Children's Services	83	90	81
Commissioning Performance&Transformation	96	95	89
Educational Services Total	97	54	53
Education	97	100	97
Educational Services Hard Copy	N/A	0	0
Public Health	94	94	100
Services Group Total	83	65	68
Community Safety	91	98	91
Community Services Total	77	53	58
Community Services	77	83	78
Community Services Hard Copy	N/A	34	45
Highways & Capital Projects Total	92	79	76
Highways & Capital Projects	92	93	85
Highways & Capital Projects Hard Copy	N/A	58	62
Council Total	89	78	76
Academy 10 Total	89	92	87
Hard Copy Total	N/A	34	43

% Completion Rate