

## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Annual Report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner  
2023/24

**Date:** 3 October 2024

**Author:** Deputy Chief Executive

### **Wards Affected**

Borough wide

### **Purpose**

To present a report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner providing an annual review of activities in respect of information management and data security.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendation**

#### **THAT:**

- 1) The Annual Report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner 2023/24 be noted.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 As Members are aware, Senior Leadership Team approved an Information Security Governance Framework setting out the Council's approach to information and cyber security risk which was endorsed by Cabinet on 1 August 2019.
- 1.2 The Council's designated Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), currently the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, has overall responsibility for the Council's information management framework and acts as the champion for information risk within the Council. The SIRO is currently supported by the Data Protection Officer, Deputy Data Protection Officer,

and the ICT Research and Development Manager. The SIRO is responsible for producing an Annual Report on information governance. The Annual Report has been prepared on behalf of the SIRO and is attached at Appendix 1. The report provides an overview of activity in relation to information governance, key achievements during 2023/24 as well as outlining work planned for 2024/25. It should provide assurance that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure information risks are being managed effectively.

- 1.3 It is important that the Council recognises the need to protect its information assets from both accidental and malicious loss and damage. The loss or damage of information can have serious consequences for the Council; not only financial and reputational but also may result in the Council being unable to deliver vital services to customers. As a result, Information Governance must be taken very seriously by the Council and this is evidenced by the on-going work activity to ensure the management and security of our information.
- 1.4 The Council has recently been audited by internal auditors in relation to its processes and procedures in relation to Information management. The auditors gave moderate assurance in relation to design and effectiveness with recommendations which have been included within the report attached as actions for 2024/25.
- 1.5 Cabinet will recall that in March of this year the Council's Digital, Data and Technology Strategy was approved, in addition, there has been a senior management restructure with investment into management positions to implement Transformation and provide management support to ICT. This investment in transformation and the recognition of its significance in driving the Council forward has to be supported by a solid governance framework in relation to ICT and data security. Work for 2024/25 is focused on strengthening cyber resilience and improving risk management in these areas. The establishment of the Business Design and Technology Authority, a body of officers that oversees requests for system changes and implementation has data security as one of its key principles when reviewing projects. This provides further oversight and a more joined up way of ensuring systems procurement has data security at its core.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Annual Report of the SIRO 2023/24 at Appendix 1 be noted.

### **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 Not to present an annual SIRO report, in which case Executive members will not be updated on information governance activity across the Council and understand whether information risks are being managed effectively.

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Council must comply with a number of statutory obligations in the General Data Protection Regulations, Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations. Whilst changes to legislation are expected, timelines for changes are unclear. Work for 2024/25 reflects recommendations from audit in terms of information and data and a review of training in both these areas is to be reviewed in 2024/25.

### **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications directly arising from this report.

### **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/environmental sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

### **8 Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Annual report of the Senior Information Risk Officer 2023/24

### **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 None identified.

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10.1 To ensure the Executive is updated in respect of the Information Governance activity across the Council in order to provide assurance that information risks are being managed effectively and to ensure Information Security policy remains fit for purpose.

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by the Deputy Chief Financial Officer**

**Date: 25/9/24**

**Drafted by the Monitoring Officer**

**Date: 25/9/24**