Audit & Governance Committee   15 January 2008

Report of the Assistant Director of Resources (Audit & Risk Management)

Information Management Strategy

Summary

1   This report is to inform the Committee of a medium term strategy to improve information governance in response to certain external imperatives and internal pressures, as attached at Annex A. Its main elements, which also contribute to other existing projects and initiatives, include:

- a project to manage down the volume of paper records prior to the move to Hungate
- increasing the use of DMS to manage information actively for business efficiency
- review of the information governance policy framework (and in particular a new data protection policy and a new partnership information sharing policy)
- a policy on contributing to the historic archive.

2   The strategy identifies the need for a set of projects, aimed at achieving various outcomes and contributing to other projects or priorities, and recommends that they should be managed as a programme.

Background

3   The strategy was approved by Council Management Team on 5 December 2007. It arose from a need to address several long-standing matters.

4   The data protection policy, approved in 2001, is the oldest element of the policy framework and is now in serious need of revision.

5   In 2004 the Records Management Code of Practice came into force, intended to help public authorities to locate and retrieve information in response to information requests from the public. Being statutory, it obliges the council to manage its records well. But it is clear that its real importance lies in the contribution to business efficiency that good records management makes. Records management is a basic office function that attracts little attention – a hygiene factor, but a high-risk one if not done well.

6   The recent loss of personal data by HM Revenues & Customs is likely to lead to much higher expectations of data security, by both regulators and citizens. The event adds urgency to an already important need to improve data sharing with partner organisations through protocols based on a reliable framework[1].

7   It is generally recognised that there is need to provide a coherent framework to Information Governance at the Council to drive the development and improvement work required in respect of information management and governance at the organisation. The effectiveness of current arrangements across the organisation are variable and the move to Hungate has thrown into sharp relief the urgent development issues facing the organisation in respect of the way it might best manage its information resources in the future. This ranges from very basic practical concerns regarding how much 'paper' people will be able to store locally in future in the new building through to how we actually ensure the security of the information we use, the lawful use of that information as well as how we protect the Council's intellectual property rights. There is a great deal to do to in the lead up to the move to Hungate and time is now short. The strategy and accompanying action plan set out how all this work can be done in a coherent way in the time-scales now available to the organisation.

Consultation

8   The Information Management Working Group has been actively engaged in helping to shape the draft strategy at Annex A. This has included input from Cllr Jamieson-Ball as the Council's Information Management Champion as well as representatives from each directorate, plus Archives and HR officers because of their specialist interest. The group meets monthly and provides liaison on relevant matters, but is also a ready route for consultation within departments when needed. The strategy has also been informed through discussion with chief officers and senior service managers in Resources and Chief Executives, further to a number of internal officers events aimed at scoping and understanding the dependencies and cross-overs between various change management initiatives currently planned or on-going at the authority.

Implications and actions

9   Revisions to the data protection and other corporate policies require Member approval and will be reported for formal decision accordingly.

10   Other elements of the strategy are essentially operational. It will be an important early task to establish the amount of work required - the cost in time and money – so that Service Plans and team work plans can be prepared. An indicative action plan will be prepared in the coming weeks, through pilot studies in suitable services, and consultation with stakeholders in departments and related programmes.

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[1] Such as the Information Commissioner's *Framework code of practice on information sharing* August 2007

11   The execution of the strategy will be managed and co-ordinated as an overall programme of work by the Information Management Officer. It is expected that existing in-house resources will be used to provide overall programme management, with any necessary consultancy support to be funded from existing budgets within the Resources Directorate to help co-ordinate work on behalf of the whole organisation.

12   The strategy includes an action plan that identifies the early presentation of policies to councillors, followed by detailed implementation within services, all framed within the deadlines imposed by the move to Hungate. Expected elements of the work in each service will be review of the 2004 records audit, completion of retention schedules, leading to estimates of the volumes to be retained (through scanning or off-site storage) or securely disposed of. Small-scale business cases will inform the DMS programme. Privacy Impact Assessments will lead directly into privacy statements as required by the already adopted Charter.

Options & analysis

13   There are no options associated with this report

Corporate objectives

14   The strategy will contribute to the following corporate objectives:

Improve leadership at all levels to provide clear, consistent direction to the organisation

Improve the way the council and its partners work together to deliver better services to people who live in York

Improve efficiency and reduce waste to free up more resources

Implications

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- **Financial** –There are no Financial implications.

- **Human Resources (HR)** – *There are no HR implications*

- **Equalities -** *There are no Equality implications*

- **Legal -** *There are no Legal implications*

- **Crime and Disorder -** *There are no Crime & Disorder Implications*

- **Information Technology (IT) –** *The only IT implication is in relation to providing an appropriate Document Management System to support electronic storage of information*

- **Property –** *There are no Property implications*

Risk Management

16   In compliance with the Councils risk management strategy. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

17   Members are asked to:

- note and comment on the strategy as attached at Annex A;

<u>Reason</u>

To provide A&G Members with the opportunity to inform the medium term strategy

- note and comment on the consideration of a revised data protection and an information sharing policy in the Forward Plan

<u>Reason</u>

To provide A&G Members with the opportunity to comment on the intention to provide a revised data protection and information sharing policy

- note and comment on the consideration of progress against the strategy to be included in the Forward Plan

<u>Reason</u>

To provide A&G Members with the opportunity to comment on the intention to provide progress reports on delivery of the strategy

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Report Approved | √ | **Date**   *27/11/07*

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*   **All** | √ |

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes:

Annex A - Information Governance Strategy 2007