TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: **Accounts and Audit Committee**
Date: **9 February 2016**
Report for: **Information**
Report of: **Information Governance Manager**

Report Title

Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 – update on significant governance issue : Information Governance

Summary

This report includes an extract from the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement outlining one of the significant governance issues identified for further development through 2014/15 i.e. Information Governance. It provides an update on work undertaken to date and further work planned in respect of this issue.

Recommendation

The Accounts and Audit Committee is asked to note the report for information which the Information Governance Manager will make reference to when attending the Committee to update members on the current position.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Paul Fox – Information Governance Manager
Extension: 1327

Background Papers:
2014/15 Annual Governance Statement

**Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 – Significant Governance Issue :
Information Governance**

1.   Introduction

1.1   Detailed below is an extract from the 2014/15 Annual Governance
       Statement in relation to one of the significant governance issues listed
       in the Statement i.e. Information Governance. This is followed by an
       update on actual progress made to date in respect of this issue.

2.   Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 Extract

2.2   The following detail was included in sections 5.3 and 5.4 of Trafford
       Council's 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement:

2.3   The Council is committed to achieving its objectives through good
       governance and continuous improvement. Going forward, the Council
       will continue to transform service delivery arrangements, to ensure the
       Council effectively delivers its objectives and manages its resources to
       meet the ongoing financial challenges being faced.

2.4   Detailed below are significant governance issues and a summary of the
       actions planned to address these in 2015/16.

2014/15 Issues and Action Planned 2015/16
2. Information Governance   The newly established Information Governance team is now in place and have developed a work plan including the following priority areas.   • Annual NHS Information Governance Toolkit accreditation required to gain connection to access NHS records   • Continue to roll out Corporate Information Governance mandatory training to all employees   • Working with stakeholders to develop Information Sharing protocols at the start of projects where the sharing of information is required   • Communicate the purpose and aim of the team and the responsibilities of Information Asset Owners (IAO) and other custodians of Trafford Council's information assets.   • Develop an Information Asset Register to identify all corporate assets and their uses   • Implement the recently developed retention and disposal policy on all historic, current and future records   • To streamline Freedom of Information and Subject Access Request to ensure compliance with the legal framework and improve processes to strengthen current practice   • Introduce Privacy Impact Assessments for all new projects that collect personal /

> sensitive data initially, and roll out retrospectively to existing projects to ensure personal/ sensitive data has not been collected unnecessarily and that the Council are operating within the guidelines of the Data Protection Act.
>
> Work on these activities is well underway and alongside these priorities an annual work plan has been developed to pick up on other work associated with the Information Governance Agenda.
>
> This team will also deliver business as usual including Freedom of information, Subject Access Requests and day to day delivery of the Information Governance Service.

3.   **Updated position (February 2016)**

Action taken 2015/16

3.1   The Corporate, centralised Information Governance Team has now been in place for a year and has been working to assist with embedding Information Governance into the working culture of Trafford Council. Information Governance staff have attended a number of focussed courses, seminars and webinars relevant to their roles.

3.2   The NHS Information Governance Toolkit was successfully completed and successful accreditation awarded. As this is an annual requirement, work is already underway on this exercise.

3.3   The communications strategy and mandatory training continues to be rolled out across the Council so that all stakeholders are aware of their information governance responsibilities. The Information Governance Team monitors the completion of the mandatory Information Governance training and issues reminders to services. The Information Governance Manager has attended service team meetings to explain the role and objectives of the Team, to explain that everyone has a role to play within Information Governance and to highlight both good and bad practice procedures. Topical Information Governance issues are being communicated to staff via the Council's intranet. In addition, presentations to Head Teachers and Chair of Governors have been rolled out during January and February to raise awareness of their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

3.4   The Information Governance Team have worked with staff to ensure that Information Sharing Protocols are written at the start of projects. In addition, staff are made aware of the need to complete Privacy Impact Assessments to ensure personal and sensitive data is not being collected unnecessarily as part of project work.

3.5   Information Asset Owners have been identified so that the Council's Information Asset Register can be brought up to date to reflect the current arrangements within the Council.

3.6   A corporate retention and disposal schedule is in place which applies to Council Services.

3.7   A new online request form has been created to make the submission of Freedom of Information requests easier for the public. In addition, a new process for recording Freedom of Information requests has been implemented to improved reporting and monitoring arrangements.

3.8   The Information Governance Team met with Freedom of Information Co-ordinators in order to foster better working relationships and to discuss better ways of responding to the large numbers of requests we receive. There was good attendance at the meeting which was interactive.

3.9   The Information Governance Action Plan has evolved during the year to ensure the Council continues to be compliant with its Information Governance requirements.

Actions Planned for 2016/17

3.10   The Information Governance team continues to embed much of the work identified as part of the 2015/16 work plan.

3.11   Information Governance staff will continue to attend relevant and focussed training to enhance their performance in their roles.

3.12   A revised action plan for 2016/17 is currently being developed to identify emerging information governance risks to the Council around compliance with Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation with mitigating actions.

3.13   Policies and procedures concerning Information Governance are continuing to be updated to reflect both legislative changes as well as changes in personnel.

3.14   It is being explored as to whether Freedom of Information and Subject Access requests can be directly input by the public onto the forthcoming Council CRM system. This would be beneficial in terms of real time progress monitoring and allocation of requests.

3.15   We are investigating external training options for the Council's Information Asset Owners who are custodians of the Council's assets to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.

3.16   We have recently accepted the Information Commissioners Office free request to conduct a voluntary data protection audit which should be of benefit of work in this area. We have requested that they consider visiting the Council later in the year due to existing work commitments.