

## **NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION**

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR ASHLEY CARTMAN,  
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE

WITH ADVICE FROM: RICHARD PENSKA, A/HEAD OF FINANCE  
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES



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**DECISION NO: 2018 / 2019 CSD53**

**SUBJECT: Shared Service for Corporate Information Governance**

**KEY DECISION: NO**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The corporate information governance team provides the following functions:

- Provides specialist advice on all matters relating to data protection and information management
- Works with colleagues in the directorates to coordinate the council's responses to enquiries made under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts
- Handles all information governance complaints and investigations
- Manages all contact with the Information Commissioner's Office

The simultaneous resignations of both members of the corporate Information Governance Team afforded an opportunity to explore the inclusion of the team's functions into the scope of the shared services arrangement that currently exists between the council and One West for the provision of internal audit and fraud services. The functions of the directorate co-ordinators have not been assessed for inclusion in the shared service.

### **DECISION:**

That the council extends the scope of services delivered through the shared service agreement with One West to include those functions currently provided by the council's corporate information governance team.

### **REASONS:**

One West currently provides information governance services to Bath and North East Somerset Council as well as to a large number of other organisations such as schools, town and parish councils, and private sector businesses. A shared service would allow the council to transfer some risks associated with the current arrangement, particularly around single points of failure. The One West team is of a scale that can provide resilience to the council's information governance function during periods of illness and holiday that cannot be achieved internally without significant additional resources.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The option to recruit to the vacancies and retain the service in-house has been considered. Whilst this approach is marginally less expensive than adopting a shared service approach, it creates a significantly higher management overhead and does not address the concerns of service resilience during periods of staff absence.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

### Costs

The net cost of the elements of the corporate information governance function that are in scope of the proposed shared services arrangement is £77.7k:

Full on-cost of officers	86,954
Supplies and services	750
Income from external trading	(10,000)
Total	77,704

Responsibility for the statutory annual fees payable to the Information Commissioner's Office for inclusion in the register of data controller fee payers, and cost of the case management system used to process freedom of information and subject access requests will be retained by the council and costs for these items are not shown.

The comparable cost of the proposed shared service is £82.4k **representing an increase in revenue costs of £4.7k.**

### Funding

The additional funding required will be found from existing budgetary provisions for the Support Services contract within the MTFP.

### Virements

The revenue budget for the information governance service will be realigned to reflect the proposal above, i.e. reducing the council's employee budgets, and increasing the contractor payments budget.

## LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The council has a statutory duty to respond to enquiries made under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), the Environmental Information Regulations (2004), and to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

## CONSULTATION

Consultation has been conducted with colleagues in P&C and D&E

## RISK MANAGEMENT

A key driver for the change in service delivery arrangements is to make the service more resilience to disruption. Current arrangements are susceptible to staff absence and single points of failure exist. The One West information governance team is of a scale sufficient to be able to accommodate periods of annual leave and staff sickness.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

The primary role of the information governance team is to ensure that the council abides by requirements laid out in statute. In this respect, the legislation is already clear in terms of equality for the rights afforded to data subjects and individuals seeking access to information.

## CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The role of the directorate co-ordinators in the information governance process has not been incorporated into the shared service proposal. Whilst there may be a future opportunity to explore this, it is considered inappropriate to do so at this time as:

- Existing directorate co-ordinators only spend a portion of their time handling information governance-related matters and hold other duties relevant to the directorate
- The model of having co-ordinators within the directorates is very successful and instils a sense of ownership of the request within the directorates rather than as an overhead loaded on the directorates by a corporate service.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

## SIGNATORIES:

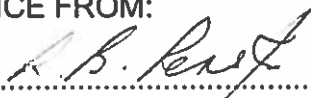
### DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed: 

Title: ..EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE

Date: ..20/11/19

### WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: 

Title: ..INTERIM DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Date: ..20/11/19

