

# **AUDIT AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

**Meeting date: 9 March 2023**

**From: Interim Corporate Director – Corporate,  
Customer and Community Services (SIRO)**

## **SENIOR INFORMATION RISK OWNER (SIRO) – INFORMATION GOVERNANCE – ASSURANCE & PERFORMANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides Audit & Assurance Committee Members with an update relating to the responsibilities of the Cumbria County Council Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and outlines activity and performance related to information governance for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 December 2022.
- 1.2 The report provides assurances that information risks have been effectively managed and where improvements have been implemented.
- 1.3 The County Council continues to be committed to effective information governance, with robust arrangements in place to ensure the council complies with legislation and adopts best practice. Governance arrangements are closely monitored to ensure systems, policies and procedures are fit for purpose, accommodate new working procedures and that all staff and elected members understand the importance of information governance and security so that good practice is everyone's business and embedded as part of the Council's culture.
- 1.4 ICT security and cyber risks continue to present an increasing global, national and local challenge to all organisations and the Council is no different. Arrangements to manage these risks are contained in the report with a summary included to list action already undertaken to maintain and strengthen defences and enhance corporate resilience.
- 1.5 Throughout the year, data protection and information governance has remained high profile with the SIRO Group meeting weekly to manage risks and drive performance improvements wherever possible. The SIRO Annual Report outlines these areas of performance in detail, showing trends against previous years and provides assurance of arrangements in place for the transfer of County Council information assets to the two new Unitary Councils at vesting Day on 1 April 2023.

## **2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 Facilitating customer access to information is in an efficient and modern way in achieving the Council's ambition to put customers at the heart of everything it does.
- 2.2 The work of the Information Governance Team is compliant with the Council's Equality Strategy. Where service users have specific communication needs related to disability or language reasonable steps will be taken to ensure access is provided to the information being requested.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Members are recommended to:
  - i. Discuss and note the content of the 2022 SIRO Annual Report attached as Appendix 1.
  - ii. Note as part of the County Council SIRO responsibilities, the SIRO, Deputy SIRO Officers, Data Protection Officer and wider ICT and Information Security professionals have invested significant time to ensure the County Council systems processes and governance arrangements are in place to transition data and information assets securely and safely from the County Council that is required for the business operations of Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Unitary Councils.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Annual Report reflects the Council's information governance work undertaken in 2022, and provides assurance that personal data is held securely; information is disseminated effectively and provides an overview of key performance indicators relating to the Council's processing of information requests within the necessary legal frameworks.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Despite the continuing challenges relating to information security, data protection and the increasing global challenges and threats relating to cyber attacks, progress has continued to be made during 2022/23 to ensure the Councils governance, procedures, culture, profile and defences are being maintained and improved, staff training and awareness is developed and delivered whilst at the same time ensuring the delivery of the services continues with strong information governance in place.
- 5.2 As this is the final SIRO report for Cumbria County Council before the Council ends on 31 March 2023, the Senior Information Risk Owner would like to place on record sincere thanks and appreciation for all the work, commitment and council wide cultural improvements the County Council has

made as a result of elected members, officers and partners working together to protect data, information and ICT security and strive for best practice for the benefit and protection of the community we collectively serve.

**Paul Robinson**  
**Assistant Director Organisational Change**  
**Interim Corporate Director Corporate Customer & Community Services**  
**Cumbria County Council Senior Risk Information Owner (SIRO)**

09 March 2023

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## **APPENDICES**

***Appendix 1: Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) – Information Governance – assurance & performance Annual Report 2022.SIRO Annual Report 2022***

Further information

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