



Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement)

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 21 January 2009

Subject: Information Security Update

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 To provide Corporate Governance and Audit Committee with an immediate update on the actions taken to-date in light of recent information security breaches (loss of a Council memory stick and the loss of a Council laptop), to seek comments from Members on these actions, and agreement to submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee with findings, recommendations and associated action plans from the internal investigations into both breaches.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Corporate Governance and Audit Committee will recall that there have been two very recent information security breaches within the Council. The first was the loss and subsequent return of an unencrypted Council memory stick containing personal information pertaining to all early-years children known to use Children's Centres across the City. The second was the assumed theft of a Council Laptop (from Council premises) used by Educational Psychologists. Both incidents were reported in the local press during December 2008.
- 2.2 An Investigation Team to look at the information security implications of each breach was established to report findings and make recommendations to mitigate the risk of such incidents happening again.
- 2.3 With regard to the first incident (Memory Stick), findings and recommendations will be finalised once the formal disciplinary procedure is finished and the outcomes reported. With regard to the second incident (Laptop), the findings and recommendations are in the process of being drafted and agreed.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 It is proposed that a report detailing these findings and recommendations (and associated action plans) be presented to the next meeting (11th February) of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee for their approval and subsequent monitoring.
- 3.2 Ahead of this report, what follows provides Corporate Governance and Audit Committee with details on the immediate action that has been taken within the Council to mitigate the risk of such breaches occurring.
- 3.3 The immediate action taken has focused primarily around the use of memory sticks across the Council, and has involved the following:
- Re-issuing of advice first published in May 2008 regarding data handling. This advice is attached for information as Appendix 1;
 - The introduction of a new Code of Practice for the use of Memory Sticks that will be rolled out starting in January 2009. The new Code of Practice is attached for information as Appendix 2;
 - A letter from the Chief Executive to all staff within the Council (excluding ALMOs and Education Leeds) outlining the importance being attached to how we look after our information and communicating the introduction of the new Code of Practice. This letter is attached for information as Appendix 3; and
 - The sign-off of a Corporate Information Security Policy which through its development will introduce nationally prescribed best practice (based on ISO 27001) to address information security within the Council. This policy is attached for information as Appendix 4.
- 3.4 Following the above, the immediate next steps to be taken will be:
- Finalising and reporting the findings and recommendations from the two investigations as per paragraph 3.1 above;
 - Introducing across the Council the new Code of Practice on the use of memory sticks and the associated procedure for replacing existing memory sticks with encrypted memory sticks on a need-only basis; and
 - Working with the ALMOs and Education Leeds to ensure that each works to adopt the new Code of Practice or works to the principles contained within to provide the Council as Data Owner with the assurances it needs on this issue.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 As Corporate Governance and Audit Committee are aware, Information Governance is part of the Council's Corporate Governance Framework. As part of this, in November 2008 Executive Board agreed to the adoption of the Leeds City Council Information Governance Framework. This framework covered the six broad areas of information governance including that pertaining to information security.
- 4.2 As part of the delivery of the Information Governance Framework, and as outlined in paragraph 3.3 above, an Information Security Policy has also recently been approved (see Appendix 4). This provides the policy framework within which the actions taken to-date and those planned to be reported at the next meeting of the Committee are/will be implemented.

4.3 Given the above, there are no further policy or governance implications as a result of this report.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

5.1 The resource requirements for delivering the contents of the Information Governance Framework were outlined to Executive Board in November 2008. These are currently being considered as part of the Council's 2009/10 budget setting process. There are no additional or further resource requirements as a result of this report.

5.2 There are no legal implications from this report.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Corporate Governance and Audit Committee are asked to comment on the actions taken to-date to mitigate the risk of recent information security breaches happening again.

6.2 Further to this, Members are asked to agree to a report detailing the findings and recommendations (and associated action plans) from the investigations undertaken into the two recent breaches to be presented to the Committee's next meeting (11th February) for their approval and subsequent monitoring.