

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 4.00 pm.

**Present:**

County Borough Councillor G Stacey – in the Chair

**County Borough Councillors:**

H Boggis	S Carter	J David
J Davies	(Mrs) M E Davies	P Griffiths
M A Norris	(Mrs) J S Ward	P Wasley
M O Weaver	E Webster	D W Weeks
R Yeo		

**Officers:**

Mr P J Lucas – Director of Legal and Democratic Services  
Mr L Gripton – Director of Customer Care & ICT  
Ms Ann Edwards – Scrutiny Support Officer

**39. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough S Lloyd and (Mrs) M Tegg.

**40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations of personal interest in relation to the agenda.

**41 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014 be approved as a correct record.

**42. PRESENTATION – THE COUNCIL'S INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

With the aid of PowerPoint presentation slides the Director of Customer Care & ICT provided Members with the details of the Council's information management arrangements.

The Director began by explaining that as well as being responsible for Customer Care & ICT he was also the Council's designated Senior Information Risk Manager or 'SIRO'.

Through his presentation the Director of Customer Care & ICT provided the Committee with an understanding of what information management entails, namely:

- Getting the right information, in the right format, in the right place, at the right time.
- Providing a framework that brings together all the legal requirements and best practice standards that relate to the way information should be handled.
- Ensuring that Information Assets are managed appropriately throughout the information lifecycle.

He explained that effective information management provides better protection of individuals and increases public trust, supports improved service delivery and creates potential efficiencies through better use of information and processes and also minimises the risk of breaking the law and potential enforcement action.

The Director of Customer Care & ICT provided an overview of the various legislation underpinning the need for such arrangements, in particular the Data Protection Act 1998. He emphasised the seriousness of breaching the Data Protection Act which can lead to a maximum financial penalty of £500k. He also informed Members of the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) which provides a framework for the regular and reciprocal sharing of personal information between organisations, and the WLGA's Local Government Data Handling Guidelines.

The Director of Customer Care & ICT reported on the work which has been undertaken across the Council to ensure compliance with the requirements which involves ensuring that robust information governance structures as well as policies and procedures are in place; developing training and awareness programmes to ensure information management issues are better understood throughout the organisation. He explained that each year the Council is required to undergo a rigorous "Public Service Network" or PSN accreditation by the Cabinet Office / GCHQ and this would take place up to September 2014 for this year. Failure to gain accreditation could have serious consequences for the Council as links with other public sector bodies could effectively be terminated. As an example of the potential impact, the Council would be unable to communicate with organisations such as the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) which could potentially have an impact on benefit payments. Significant preparatory and improvement work is undertaken to mitigate such risks annually.

The Director of Customer Care & ICT reported on the 2014/15 Action Plan which set out key areas of work under six main themes which included Training and Awareness, in particular developing information management training and support arrangements for Elected Members and Schools. He also reported on the key issues for the year ahead, including:

- Consideration of the new EU Data Protection legislation due in 2015 – "Privacy by Design" principles.

- Priority around Elected Member and School (Heads) support around their individual Data Controller responsibilities.
- Increasing work around the development of Information Sharing Protocols and Data Processing Agreements (whereby another party processes data on behalf of the Council) to support collaboration and partnership activities e.g. Youth Offending Team, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Integrated Offender Management etc.

He also explained the need to manage any potential information management breaches by taking quick and significant action thereby minimising the potential harm or detriment to data subjects.

In conclusion, the Director of Customer Care & ICT informed Members that he would be happy to provide the Committee with any future process and progress updates.

Following the presentation the Director of Community Care & ICT responded to Members questions.

In response to a query relating to the accuracy of information shared between public bodies he explained that it was important that any information was 'fit for purpose', in line with the Data Protection Act principles discussed earlier. With regard to the checking or cross matching of data held he pointed out that it would very much depend on the type of transaction (some being anonymous and not requiring any information capture about the person requesting e.g. a recycling bag) and also legislation which enables 'person' / 'place' verification e.g. Electoral Registration statutory provision.

A Member voiced a concern that whilst a great deal was made about data protection issues and the inappropriate release of information it was usually the case that any review of serious incidents concluded that the cause was due to a lack of information sharing. The Director of Customer Care & ICT explained that it was important that each public body was clear about what can be shared, the purpose of that and very importantly the 'consent' arrangements being in place to support that, but that the majority of work he and his IM officer are supporting at the moment was about ensuring there were robust information sharing protocols in place and repeated various examples of initiatives and partnerships that were being aided by information sharing arrangements (in addition to above examples, reference also made to the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service arrangements).

A Member queried what would happen in the situation where someone sent an e-mail to the wrong person. The Director of Customer Care & ICT explained that staff are bound by a duty of confidentiality within the Council around their handling of information. He reported that regular Bulletins were sent to Staff and Members which reinforce and remind all about being careful (and tips to

help with this) when sending e-mails and explained that there was a function in our Outlook mail system to 'recall' e-mails.

In closing, the Chairman thanked the Director for his attendance and detailed presentation.

G Stacey  
Chairman

The meeting closed at 17:03.