

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

20 MARCH 2023

1. INFORMATION GOVERNANCE AUDIT OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the contents of the Annual Report from Sandwell MBC 2022.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 Sandwell MBC undertake an annual themed audit of information governance activities in the organisation. They assess information governance activities and provide an assessment of assurance level and any key areas for improvement.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The organisation has an existing Management of Information framework and supporting policies that define how information is managed within the organisation.
- 3.2 The annual audit by Sandwell MBC provides assurance about performance against specific legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 3.3 Evidence is provided by the organisation to demonstrate compliance with policies and procedures related to the relevant legislation.
- 3.4 Outcomes from internal audits are included in the Annual Report of the SIRO to provide additional assurance about

information governance activities.

- 3.5 There were two outcomes identified in this audit assessed as 'Significant' and 'Merits Attention'.
- 3.6 The first and significant outcome was related to some of the response times for freedom of information requests being outside the statutory time limit of 20 working days.
- 3.7 We are addressing the first outcome by automating Approvals using Microsoft 365 to speed up the process as we found that completed requests sent for approval via e-mail were missed in email inboxes.
- 3.8 The second outcome which merited attention was an amendment to the process flowchart as it was incorrectly showing senior leadership approval after sending the response to the requester instead of before which is the correct process that is followed.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 This is not required as this report does not impact upon any protected characteristics.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 It is considered best practice for organisations to provide assurance in relation to its performance reference information governance.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Improved proactive information governance reduces the risk of regulatory action and monetary penalties from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Annual Data and Governance Report to SIRO - 2022.docx](#)

The contact officer for this report is Karen Gowreesunker, Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

WAYNE BROWN
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER