



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 25 JUNE 2026
Subject	INFORMATION GOVERNANCE UPDATE AND SENIOR INFORMATION RISK OWNER (SIRO) ANNUAL HIGHLIGHT REPORT 2025/26
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Alaric Smith - Executive Member for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Phil Martin – Chief Executive Email: phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Phil Martin – Chief Executive Email: phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with its first Information Governance & SIRO report, summarising the Council’s key actions and progress in reducing information risk and strengthening data and information management controls during the 2025/26 financial year.
Annexes	Annex A – Information Governance & Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) Report 2025/26
Recommendation(s)	That the Audit and Governance Committee resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the report of the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) on Information Governance for the 2025/26 period2. Approve the future inclusion of the SIRO’s Annual Report within the Annual Governance Statement for reporting purposes
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting Residents First• Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO

Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Senior Leadership Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief Executive Officer• Director of Finance & S151 Officer• Director of Governance & Regulatory Services (Monitoring Officer) <p>Projects, Governance, Risk and Performance Group and the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief Technology Officer• Data Protection Officer• ICT Audit & Compliance Manager• Compliance & Information Governance Officer
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This is the first time this Committee has received an Information Governance & Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) report (Annex A). It provides an overview of the Council's key actions and positive progress in information governance and information risk management during the financial year 2025/26, outlining the advancements in reducing information risk and strengthening controls around data and information management.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** The Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) has accountability for ensuring that effective systems and processes are in place to address the Information Governance agenda including records and document management. With completion of phase I of the Publica review in November 2024, the role of SIRO moved from Publica to the Council and the role is held by the Director of Place.
- 2.2** The SIRO is responsible for the corporate approach to managing information risk including:
- acting as corporate champion for information governance, security and data protection
 - providing a focus for the management of information governance at a senior level
 - ensuring sufficient professional capacity and expertise is in place
 - ensuring that the Council has appropriate information security policies in place
 - providing advice and reports in respect of information security incidents, risks and trends
 - assessing how the Council's strategic priorities may be impacted by these incidents, risks and trends and how they can be managed, resourced and scrutinised effectively
 - implementation of the Council's approach to the management, retention and destruction of paper and electronic records.
- 2.3** The SIRO is supported in this work by the Data Protection Officer (DPO) which is a statutory role required by Article 37 of the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Section 69 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other compliance and governance officers.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1** There are no alternative options for this report.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1** It is considered best practice to report the areas detailed in section 2.2 to Members. The report aligns with the Audit & Governance Committee's responsibility to ensure the Council's control framework remains robust.
- 4.2** For future reporting, it is recommended the SIRO's report is included with the Annual Governance Statement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Proactive information management helps reduce Council costs by minimising risks such as regulatory fines and expenses from cyber-attacks.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Information management and data protection are subject to a range of legislation including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 as amended, as detailed in the Information Governance & SIRO report 2025/26.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Not producing an Information Governance and SIRO report may result in insufficient oversight of information risk management, leading to potential non-compliance with statutory requirements (e.g., UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018), increased vulnerability to data breaches, and reputational damage. This lack of formal reporting could also hinder transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in information governance practices.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 Data Protection policies and procedures are available on the Council's website. Alternative channels remain available for those customers who may not be able to access or use digital services and reasonable adjustments for disabilities are made where required.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 A Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT) is not required for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

(END)