



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Information Management Strategy

Document 2

Background and Key Messages



March 2006

Chester-Le-Street District Council Information Management Strategy

The Chester-le-Street Information Strategy comprises of three documents:

Document 1. Strategy Summary – sets out a plain English guide to the strategy

Document 2. Background and Key Messages – sets out the detail behind the strategy

Document 3. Model Action Plan – sets out a living action plan to deliver the strategy

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1. Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the background to the Strategy and identify the key messages the council needs to address. Information is the bedrock of Government and Authority business; whether it is used for council operations, securing resources to meet the Chester-Le-Street commitments, or the general processes and the well being of its staff. The Local Government Act clearly identifies the importance of information and the need for change to exploit fully the opportunities of what is being called the information age. The wider significance of information is recognised in the Modernising Government initiative, which adds impetus and direction to Chester-le-Street's investments in current and planned information capabilities.
- 1.2 We live in a society where information is abundant. Having the 'right' information when it is required is essential if the authority is to carry out its duties in an efficient and effective manner. The aim of this strategy is to support the work of Chester-le-Street District Council by improving the management of the Council information and enabling the exchange of information with external bodies.
- 1.3 Recent MORI research has indicated that there is a direct correlation between people being better informed and their satisfaction levels with public services and so it is important to improve our delivery of information.

Scope

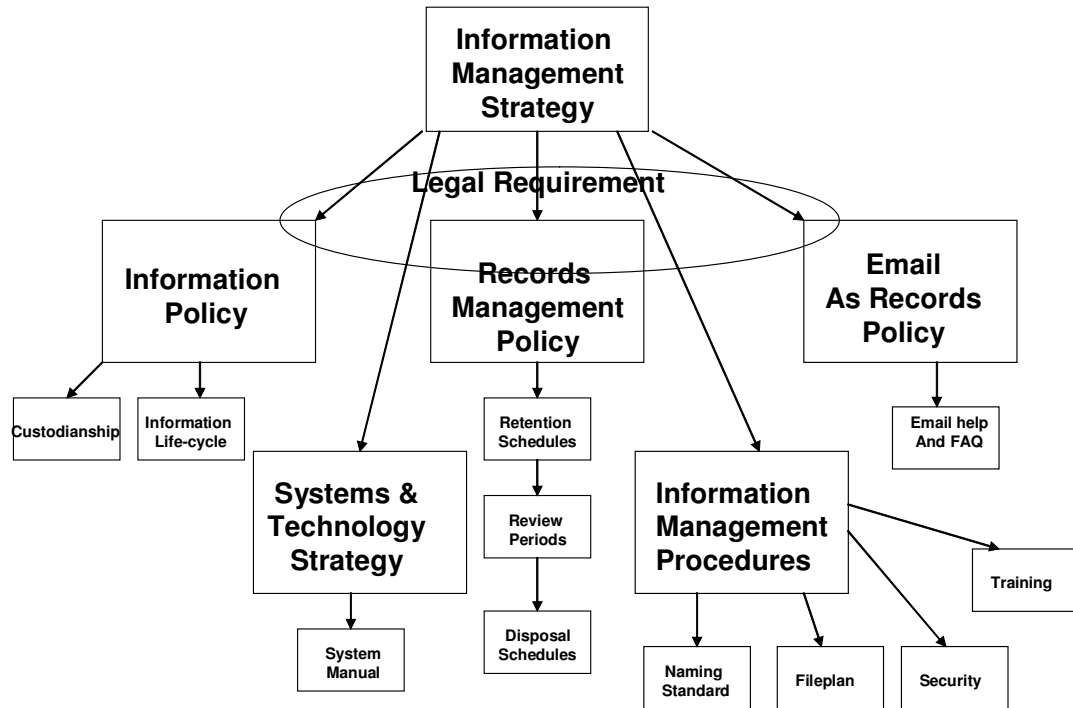
- 1.4 This document addresses issues which the whole authority has to tackle and to which individual service and support departments must contribute. The specific information systems within departments have not been described in this strategy as it is an authority-wide document and covers common issues in the departments. All departments will need to work together and with appropriate partners to achieve our objectives.

Audience

- 1.5 The intended audience is principally Members, Chief Officers, Senior Officers and staff with information management responsibilities. Our citizens, Local Strategic Partnerships, suppliers, other Local Authorities and public agencies must be made aware of our principles, policies and intentions however.

Method

- 1.6 This strategy is the primary document within the subject area of Information Management and the following diagram shows the secondary document hierarchy:-

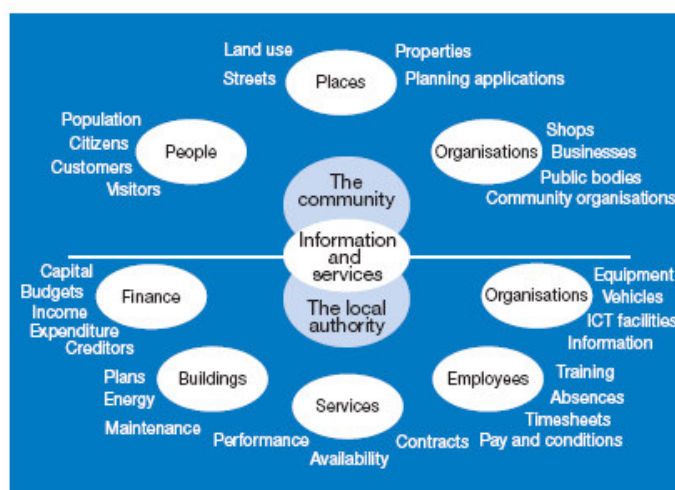


1.7 This document has been produced by a small team with officers dedicated to Corporate Governance within the Council. The council engaged Morpheus Limited to help produce the Strategy. Research was undertaken to support the Council's e-Government approach and to identify the key drivers for change.

2. Reasons for Change

Managing Information as an Asset

- 2.1 The council's Corporate Plan and Improvement and Recovery Plan prioritise customer excellence as the way forward for Chester-le-Street. The Development of a Customer Excellence Strategy and Information Management Strategy are key components of the Corporate Plan and Improvement and Recovery Plan. An Information Management Strategy is needed to allow Chester-le-Street District to have the right information about our customers so we can make the right decisions that affect our community at the right time.
- 2.2 The Board of Directors (or in the case of Chester-le-Street District, the Corporate Management Team) of any organisation is responsible for the conduct of that organisation in every way - financially, operationally, legally and ethically. Specifically, it has responsibility for its assets and their use. Many responsibilities of a Board of Directors concern the activities and processes of the organisation, e.g. investment for a new product, selling in a new market, building a new plant. But some of the most important responsibilities are defined functionally by subject, for example financial affairs, human resources. One such subject is information - not information systems but the information itself.¹
- 2.3 Organisations operate by producing, transmitting and digesting information. The **right information at the right place at the right time and at the right cost** is essential for effective conduct of business. Equally, the misuse, copying, theft, loss and abuse of information can be the cause of scandals and business failures.
- 2.4 Information is required in every activity and every function, thus proper control of information and, cares in its use, have always been subjects of concern. Modern computers and communications can store information, process it and make it accessible in ways never before achieved. This can be of great additional benefit to service delivery but can also enhance opportunities for misuse, theft, loss and abuse and, in particular, indiscriminate dissemination of information.



¹ The Hawley Committee Report – Information as an Asset – The Board Agenda

- 2.5 In some organisations, it is accepted that some types of information are assets, for example intellectual property such as patents and copyright. All significant information in an organisation, regardless of its purpose, should be properly identified, even if not in an accounting sense, for consideration as an asset of the business.
- 2.6 Most organisations have extensive experience in the subjects and functions they address. Relatively few organisations have experience in the acquisition, processing, storage and transmitting of information and fewer still in the responsibilities which arise when information is considered as an asset. There is a growing movement within business and local government to treat information as a key shared asset in the same way as Property or Finance. Consequently similar issues arise:
- What do we own?
 - What condition is it in?
 - How can we make best use of it?
 - What might be surplus?
 - How do we protect it?
 - What happens if it is destroyed?
- 2.7 The Hawley Committee was created in 1993 as part of a KPMG Strategic Initiative involving over 500 company directors. In structure it was similar to the Cadbury Committee (chaired by Sir Adrian Cadbury) dealing with Quality Management. Dr Robert Hawley was at that time the chief executive of British Energy, and recognised as a significant captain of Industry. The project gained more impetus when the IRA London bombings indicated that information loss and the failure to manage a restart could bring down an organisation. Under his chairmanship the committee explored the concept of **information as an asset** and formulated a 10 point plan for all those in control of organisations (see Appendix 1).

KEY MESSAGE 1

Councillors, Executive Members and all Officers of the Council will need to treat Information as an Asset by good custodianship throughout the Information Lifecycle.

Business Focus- What the Strategy will mean

- 2.8 In recent months considerable effort has been spent by Chester-le-Street, through its Improvement and Recovery Programme to identify and commence projects to improve the service values of the Council. The Information Management Project (Pegasus Project) has a number of key aims enabling the council to meet its Priority Outcomes requirements. The aim of the strategy is to enable the council to have and use **right information at the right place at the right time and at the right cost**. There will be cost implications to the council. The approach taken in developing the strategy is a transitional one. It will allow the council to continue to focus on its core business while incrementally making decisions on how it will progress in the future. The Strategy aims to, amongst other things, address the following issues:
- Better use of technology to improve the way we store, retrieve and use documents and records
 - Better use of office storage space as a result
 - Develop appropriate policies and procedures
 - Meet government requirements and legislative responsibilities including key Priority Service Outcomes
 - How decisions may be made to resource what we are required to do
- 2.9 One of the deliverables of the Strategy will be the better use of existing office space. This will be achieved by the reduction in the need for physical office filing space. In time this should lead to a reduction in off-site storage costs
- 2.10 As Chester-le-Street exploits electronic working then it must expect a significant reduction in photocopying and manual distribution costs. Scanning of paper documents will add to the corporate knowledge bank and assist in meeting the Information Reuse Directive. This will enable quicker retrieval and use of information maximising the use of officer time.
- 2.11 The growth of email as a business communication is beginning to have serious repercussions on corporate systems and Freedom of Information / Environmental Information Regulations (FOI/EIR) requests. Email should be treated like any other business communication and managed in a “record keeping” environment.
- 2.12 The introduction of an Electronic Document Records Management Solution (EDRMS) will provide a long-term facility for document accessibility and preservation in a controlled manner. This again will maximise officer time and bring with it clear efficiency savings. This may be difficult to quantify at the moment but will become evident as the Strategy is implemented. It will also protect against unauthorized access and alteration
- 2.13 The old computing adage ‘garbage in, garbage out still applies today: Chester-le-Street therefore need to have intelligent, fast document search and retrieval to all its information. This would be best served by using universal document access via standard Web browsers

- 2.14 As Chester-le-Street moves towards a process active organisation the EDRMS will integrate with existing applications. It will also deliver controlled procedures and the authorisation online and therefore standardise business processes and authorisation.
- 2.15 Information Management is not an end in itself and must support the business needs of the Council. The Information Management Strategy is a living document and will be kept under constant review.

KEY MESSAGE 2
Chester-le-Street District Council will need to provide internal resources – Money, Management and Staff with the right skill set.

Government Requirements

The National Archive

- 2.16 In 2001 the Government issued the E-government Framework for Document and Records Management as part of its approach to Modernising Government. It states that government need to

“ provide a framework and a set of milestones to move towards full electronic records management in order to meet the Modernising Government target - that by 2004 all newly created public records will be electronically stored and retrieved - through gaining formal control of existing electronic records which have continuing value as evidence; and to plan for the implementation of new electronic records management systems and facilities”

The Public Records Office (PRO), now known as the National Archives Office (TNA), was charged with custodianship of the framework and its delivery in government. The TNA have also promoted the use of “International Standards Organisation (ISO) 15489 - a methodology for Electronic Document Records Management (ERDM)” and have produced an ISO 15489 Compliance checklist

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)

- 2.17 For the last four years the ODPM has required councils to submit an IEG statement, stating how far the council has moved towards Electronic Government. The ODPM have developed clear guidance on what electronic government means and this includes advice on Priority Service Outcomes (PSO) . By December 2005 Chester-le-Street had implemented 83% of the required PSO’s. One particular requirement is:

G19 *“Adoption of ISO 15489 methodology for Electronic Document Records Management (ERDM) and identification of areas where current records*

management policies, procedures and systems need improvement to meet the requirements of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection legislation” is causing great difficulty.

Most local councils have yet to start tackling this requirement with any vigour, normally due to lack of suitably qualified resource. The government acknowledges this and only requires that councils have a plan in place by March 2006 to address this particular Priority Service Outcome. This Strategy addresses this requirement

KEY MESSAGE 3

The council need to demonstrate compliance with government objectives for Electronic Document and Records Management as set out in the Priority Service Outcomes

Legal Obligations

- 2.19 There has been a raft of new legislation in the last few years which has placed new obligations on Councils. There are regulations which require us to provide information within given timescales, to make information more accessible and to guard people's rights. In order to comply we must manage our information effectively, taking into account these new legal requirements. Below is a list of recent legislation which affects some or all departments:

Public Records Act 1958 and 1967

All Public authorities have a duty under the Public Records Act to archive records either locally, at county or nationally at Kew, London.

Data Protection Act (DPA)

There are 8 principles within the Data Protection Act as follows:-

- Personal data will be lawfully and fairly processed. Data subjects must be told why personal data is being processed.
- The council will hold the minimum personal data necessary to enable it to perform its functions
- Every effort will be made to ensure that information is accurate and up to date and that inaccuracies are corrected without unnecessary delay.
- Personal data will be accurate in respect of matters of fact. Opinions will be carefully and professionally expressed.
- Personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was produced. A regular review should be conducted.
- The council will respond to and assist every request for access to data from employees or members of the Public.
- Personal data will be kept in an appropriately controlled and secure environment (Security Policy available on request).
- Data will only be transferred to other countries based on strict Data Protection guidance.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

This act became active on 1st January 2005 and grants two basic rights to information by anyone:-

- The rights to immediate access to information published in a Publication Scheme;
- The right to ask two questions: "Do you have it"? and "May I see it"?

The Act applies to all recorded information that is held. When an individual uses his/her access rights, a new administrative regime will kick in to ensure statutory compliance. This will include following the charging regime, managing the timetable, considering the exemptions and following the process for applying the public interest test. Throughout the process, the receiving organisation has a continuing obligation to advise and assist the applicant.

Environmental Information Regulations 2005

This European Regulation became active on the 1st January 2005. The new regulations have broadened the definition of environmental information. Environmental information covers information on the state of the environment, such as

- air, water, soil, land, flora and fauna (including human beings), diversity, genetically modified organisms
- information on emissions and discharges, noise, energy, radiation, waste and other such substances
- measures and activities such as policies, plans and agreements
- reports, cost benefit and economic analyses
- the state of human health and safety, contamination of the food chain
- cultural sites and built structures (as they may be affected by environmental factors)

Like FOI an EIR request has to be replied within 20 working days. The key difference is that these requests can be made over the telephone and therefore any member of staff could fall liable.

Re-use of Public Information Directive - effective 1 July 2005

The Directive will require public bodies to define and list information assets suitable for re-use, grant licences and levy fees for the re-use of non-exempt information. Its aim is to make the process of accessing re-usable public sector documents open and transparent, and encourage the sharing of best practice. This is a market based piece of legislation (for the EU) rather than freedom of information legislation. Existing UK copyright legislation, including Crown and Parliamentary copyright, remains unchanged. It is also, in a small way, a possible opportunity for revenue generation, albeit limited.

The information assets likely to be of interest are of a value added or commercial nature:

- Many value-added products can be produced from core data
- Some products may compete in the commercial marketplace

- Commercial rates can be applied where appropriate, e.g. bodies operating commercially to cover their costs, e.g. trading funds.
- Charges should cover the costs of collection, production, reproduction and dissemination, together with a reasonable return on investment, based on normal accounting cycles
- Public bodies may be challenged to justify charges. The anticipated "useful economic life" will continuously be extended by data capture and daily database update.

KEY MESSAGE 4

Chester-le-Street District Council will need to demonstrate their compliance with all relevant Legislation.

KEY MESSAGE 5

Chester-le-Street District Council will need to actively comply with the Data Protection Act. The authority falls short of demonstrating compliance throughout all levels of staff. A revamp of the policy and procedures need attention.

External Inspection – Audit Commission Report

2.20 The council has addressed previous Audit Commission criticism of progress in respect of e- government. So far as Chester-le-Street itself is concerned, progress to date in terms of implementing e-government has accelerated. In respect of the 2005 target only 17 per cent Priority Shared Outcomes had been achieved as at 31 March 2005. By December 2005 83% of required Priority Service Outcomes had been achieved. The % of services delivered electronically was 42% at the end of March 2005. This had risen to 100%, top quartile performance by the end of December 2005. This was a result of developing a clear implementation plan or project structure, through the Modernisation Team to achieve annual IEG statements, together driven by Member and Officer e-government and customer excellence champions, the Head of Information Services and the Customer Relationship Manager. No work has been done to systematically ascertain how services are currently delivered, what potentially could be delivered electronically in the future, and how this change could be brought about. The recent Audit Commission Progress Assessment has acknowledged the progress made. The council needs to concentrate on Information as an Asset as part of its future plans

Operational Considerations

2.21 There are many operational issues which good information management facilitates:

- Consistency of information used

- Decision making
- Knowing what our customers need
- Meeting legal requirements and Government targets
- Lack of space – vast quantities of paper records
- Knowing what information we already have
- Quality of information used
- Educating people on what information we have
- Clear ownership of information
- Ability to share information easily both internally and externally
- Ability to find information easily
- Reduced costs through removing duplicate information
- Partnership working
- Accountability, through legally admissible records
- Corporate memory – what has happened in the past
- Removing unnecessary work – less time searching and updating
- Identify redundant processes and information
- Reduction in the risk of losing information and the cost of replacing it
- What information management training is required?

Technology

2.22 The advances in technology open up new opportunities to manage our information better. Whilst this is likely to involve some initial investment, the potential benefits are more efficient working and/or reduced costs. There are a number of technological developments listed in Appendix 2 of this document which could undoubtedly bring benefits to the Council.

3. Information Management Objectives

Council Objectives

- 3.1 The Community Strategy sets out the communities' vision of Chester-le-Street in the next 10 years. This vision includes:

"By 2014 the District of Chester-le-Street will be a place where people choose to live, to learn, to work and to visit".

- 3.2 Chester-le-Street council vision is:

'Working together to fulfil the needs of our community'

- 3.3. Beneath this Chester-le-Street has adopted a range of values and priorities. The core values include:

'an authority which is customer focussed, that understands the needs of communities and values resident and business engagement

- 3.4 Chester-le-Street's first priority is about customer excellence. It seeks to improve customer care while providing new ways to access our services. This includes meeting our 'e-government' targets and national priority service outcomes. This strategy aims to improve the accessibility of information for service providers and to provide information through multiple routes which will improve the accessibility of services to all groups in the community. Improving the management of information will contribute to the continuing delivery of the Council's core values of:

- Quality of services and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Accessibility to services based on user and stakeholder needs.
- Fairness of treatment for users, customers, staff and the wider community. For instance in order to be fair, you have to have the right information at the right time.
- Sustainability built into all service delivery

Information Management Objectives

- 3.5 The council's information management vision can be described as

"Getting the right information to the right people at the right time and at the right cost"

To deliver accurate, relevant, timely and consistent information to those who need it, and have authorisation to access it, and to do this in a cost-effective manner.

- 3.6 In developing this Information Management Strategy the following information management objectives are additionally defined as they will have a significant bearing on achievement of Gershon efficiencies:

Records Management:

To comply with ISO 15489 – records management accreditation as required under priority outcomes G19.

To conduct an Information stock take that will satisfy the Information as an Asset agenda and Re-use of Public Sector Information Directive.

To develop the Council's draft information structure (Fileplan).

To prioritise processes and develop a roll-out programme for ERDMS which can be costed for the financial year 2006/7.

To develop a plan covering each aspect of the Corporate Records Programme of Work and implement it. (This programme supports the Freedom of Information Code of Practice on Records Management)

To develop and implement a plan for improving records disposal policies To comply with PD0008, a BSI code of practice for the Legal Admissibility and Evidential Weight of information stored electronically.

Security:

To develop and implement a plan that will systematically bring CLS into compliance with the Information Security Management standards (ISO 17799)

To cost and assign resources to complete Information Security Review

To develop and implement a campaign to raise awareness of Information Security.

To develop and implement a plan that will systematically bring Chester-le-Street into compliance with the Information Security Management standards (ISO 17799).

Standards:

To report on Chester-le-Street's compliance to the technology standards for sharing information (e-Gif)

To start implementing the address standard (BS7666), and the standard for personal data (Government Data Catalogue) for in-house developments and amendments

To assess the percentage of compliant in-house systems and report

To assess our suppliers state of compliance to B7666 and the Government Data Catalogue

To report on the Council's compliance to the technology standards for sharing information (e-Gif)

All new Chester-le-Street developed software which holds address information will hold that information in accordance with BS7666 (address standard).

All new Chester-le-Street developed software will hold data in accordance with The Government Data Standards Catalogue (this specifies how personal data should be stored electronically).

Geographical Information:

To manage the transition of GIS data and mapping through the Ordnance Survey Positional Accuracy Improvement (PAI) Programme. To complete all PAI related work by 01/04/2007.

To produce, maintain and make available GIS across the Council To move to National Land Information Service (NLIS) Level 3, an automated interface to the NLIS hub.

As a result of achieving these outcomes Chester-le-Street will deliver accurate, relevant, timely and consistent information to those who need it, and have authorisation to access it, and to do this in a cost-effective manner.

KEY MESSAGE 6

Senior management need to recognise that Records Management, Security, Compliance with Standards and the use of Graphical Information Systems are a key contributor to internal efficiency under the Gershon proposals.

4. Information Management Vision

4.1 Successful implementation of this strategy would enable the following features:

- The organisation will be respected by the public for its service delivery, the majority of queries will be resolved at the first port of call and any follow up is handled efficiently and effectively. This will mean appropriate information available any time of the day or night, by staff in offices or out in the field. It will be through a variety of methods, face to face, call centre, web etc. but all relying on the same, consistent, accurate up to date information. The benefits of constant access to information will be cost justified for each system.
- Employees will be committed to excellent information management. They will be trained in the core capabilities of information management and understand their responsibilities and managers will set a good example to their staff. Information management is explicit in job descriptions and recruitment procedures require this topic to be explored.
- All Council information will be catalogued and cross referenced for easy access through the Intranet as the single point of entry.
- The Council will be truly customer focussed and only collect and maintain information to support its objectives. There will be a culture of ruthlessly destroying old, out of date information, but of meticulously preserving information of merit e.g. trends. This means that gaps in information or new requirements will be easily identified and that there is a process in place to address this situation.
- No crisis would prove too difficult for this organisation, as business continuity and disaster recovery plans are embedded in operational life and tested regularly.
- Chester-le-Street will be a council, where performance management and reporting is effortless, with systems designed to collect the right information and pass it to management systems for collation and presentation.
- The culture of this organisation is to be open and share information unless there is a good reason not to do so.
- Members and employees know there is an Information Management Strategy and how they personally are working towards the aims and objectives.
- In summary, we need relevant, accurate timely information from a reputable source which is re-usable. To do this we must manage the lifecycle of information from creation or acquisition to destruction or permanent archive taking due account of its security, storage, distribution and presentation.

KEY MESSAGE 7

The Information Management vision has to be communicated to all Chester-le-Street stakeholders. It should become an intrinsic part of how all stakeholders will treat information.

5. Principles

- 5.1 It will be important that Information will be managed to a standard of good quality using recognised best practice from the British Standards Institute and The National Archives. The following are key principles to good practice:

Information Good Practice

- Information will be captured once as close to the source as possible, and shared as many times as needed: reducing the duplication of keyed input, thus increasing consistency and lessening the cost of both input and maintenance.
- Shared information will be registered and controlled: responsibilities for setting standards for data and maintenance of data will be defined and sources of data and relationships between data recorded.
- Information will be managed in a secure fashion: ensuring the continuity of operations and minimising the possibility of damage to service provision by limiting the impact of security threats or incidents, whether internal, external, deliberate or accidental.
- Information will be accurate and up to date: to support Council operations and the decision-making process.
- Information must be readily accessible to those who need it for operational or business reasons: to enable staff to carry out their duties.
- Information must be periodically reviewed: to ascertain current relevance and to determine archival procedures or complete removal. This ensures that old or out-of-date information is not stored unnecessarily or used in the wrong context.
- The electronic transmission of information will be promoted where there is a clear business benefit in doing so: to improve efficiency and consistency of information presentation across the Council.

Personal Data

- Personal data will only be stored as long as it is done in a way compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Funding

- Each significant corporate initiative will require its own individual business case. This will be presented to the Programme Management Board and members as appropriate. The case will include the details of the funding arrangements. Investment will be required to implement this strategy, particularly to carry out an information stock take, put in place the relevant standards and train staff.

Return on Investment

5.2 The investment in managing information will bring a mixture of savings:

- Direct
- Floor space savings
- Paper storage
- Less walking to access files
- Improved quality of service – get it right first time
- Indirect
- Act lawfully
- Meet our 2006 e-government targets
- Improve our responsiveness to requests for information
- Share and exchange information efficiently
- Make full use of our information assets

On the other hand failure to invest will mean we may be unable to achieve these aims and that if we do it will be more costly than working in a disciplined manner.

Training and development

5.3 It will be essential to train people at all levels in the principles of information management, particularly with respect to filing structures, the control of documents and managing their lifecycle. Training will be required in the customer service aspects of delivering information and also on new and existing information management standards.

Ownership of Information

5.4 Information is a corporate asset. It is not something that "belongs" to an individual or a department. The overriding approach is that subject to permissions, information is accessible and is shared across the organisation between those people who have the right of access. The "ownership" theme will be developed through a Corporate Records Programme, which will identify records and their managers. Reports on progress will be made to the Programme Management Board on a regular basis.

First point of access to council information

5.5 Typically, intranets are being seen as making an important contribution to both the management of information and making the information accessible. The council will be committed to the concept of Intranet as the first point of access to Council data. To be successful, voluntary consensus will not be enough. Progress will be reported to the IT Board on a regular basis.

KEY MESSAGE 8

Information needs to be managed to a standard of good quality using recognised best practice from the British Standards Institute and The National Archives.

6. Responsibility and Accountability

6.1 Chester-le-Street has developed a Corporate Governance Group. The CGG will be chaired by the Director of Resources and include senior officers with responsibilities for financial control, internal control, legal services, risk management and corporate development. It needs to develop a sub-group, or Information Management Monitoring Team bringing together all aspects of information aspects of information management and with the specific purpose of:

- developing information strategies, policies, plans and procedures
- providing best practice and standards on information management
- coordinating implementation of strategies
- identifying the current information assets and analysing gaps
- setting up an information guardianship programme
- defining classification regimes
- collating common themes from departmental business plans
- providing methods and tools to manage business processes better
- setting and monitoring information performance measures
- identifying training needs
- providing support to departments
- operationally managing corporate aspects of information e.g. data protection, FOI and security

6.2 The council will need to make a decision on how to resource the management of information within the council and, in particular whether to establish a dedicated resource such as a Corporate Governance/Information Manager. Whatever the outcome of such deliberations this resource will be a member of the Corporate Governance Group and chair the sub group. Membership will include officers with responsibility for Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Information Security. A group of departmental officers will need to be created to support information management at the service level. Each Service Team Manager will nominate a person from within their department with explicit responsibility for ensuring their department's compliance with the strategy and delivery of the action plan and attending the Information Management Monitoring Team.

6.3 This group will update the strategy annually. Approval of the strategy will be through Corporate Management Team and full council. Consideration will be given by Scrutiny Committee and by the Executive where necessary. Progress on the strategy will be reported regularly to the Corporate Management Team. The Corporate Governance/ Information Manager will advise the CGG.

6.4 The Model Action Plan that accompanies this Strategy Document will inevitably comprise a variety of activities. Where these are service specific, they will be incorporated into Service Plans as necessary. Corporate activities will be built into the Council's Corporate Plan when it is developed.

- 6.5 Data Protection & Security Action plans will form sub-sets of this Strategy. The District Audit report on Data Protection highlights that departments must allocate more time to compliance. The CGG will develop future Geographical Information Strategies.
- 6.6 Once an audit of information has been undertaken, the posts relating to managing the data sets will be identified. Information tasks will be attached to their job descriptions and information management competencies will be reflected in their person specifications. This network of people will be trained in information management and will assist the CGG in implementing the strategy. The Council's appraisal system will then help to maintain the levels of competency through corporate staff training programmes.

KEY MESSAGE 9

That a Corporate Governance Group should deliver the full range of Information Management activities as outlined in the Model Action Plan.

7. Priority Areas

Openness and Transparency

- 7.1 The aim, intent and policy of Chester-le-Street is that information will be published or otherwise made available to all our stakeholders unless there is good reason for it to be withheld. As is the case for other organisations, Chester-le-Street has to be mindful of the need for confidentiality in certain circumstances and on occasions it may be necessary for us to make decisions to withhold information. The principles under which such decisions will be made are:
- the proper requirements of security and commercial confidentiality
 - legal constraints on publication
 - the proper consideration of the timing of publication
 - the rights and interests of those whom such information relates or belongs

Records Management

- 7.2 A "record" is evidence of an activity or decision and demonstrates accountability. Records sit alongside other documents, are of equal importance for managing services and can be part of the same management process. It would be difficult to apply different rules and different technology on such closely related items of information. In order to achieve more consistency in managing records we must develop a Council wide policy for records management.
- 7.3 This Council will need to comply with the Government Guidelines on Electronic Records Management, the Freedom of Information Act, Environmental Information Regulations and Re-use of Public Sector Information Directive. In order to facilitate these requirements the Council needs an Electronic Records Management System. A key issue is the ability to restore all necessary data quickly in the event of a disaster. There are a number of alternatives to solving this problem. Business requirements for long term storage need to be documented, followed by a technical strategy to support the requirements of the various departments.
- 7.4 The Council will adopt ISO 15489 on Records Management. An important early step in managing our information assets will be to document the existence of all data-sets and to maintain that catalogue. This will ensure that the Council knows what information it holds, devotes effort only to that which it needs and allows us to exploit our assets to the full. This catalogue will be shared, so that others know of the existence of data and do not duplicate effort in re-establishing existing datasets. This will also enable queries to be dealt with effectively and decisions to be information based. Priority in cataloguing will go into areas which support e-Government, and current legislation. This implies cataloguing all personal data for Data Protection purposes, public data-sets under Freedom of Information Legislation and Property/address related information for e-Government purposes. As a result of the audit, work processes surrounding the records will be reviewed to identify potential improvements to:

- customer service
- supporting electronic service delivery
- working more seamlessly with relevant partners and
- meeting the legislative requirements of Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

For further details on records management see Appendix 3

Standards

- 7.5 In the "joined up" world it will be difficult to link information unless common referencing systems at national, regional and local levels are embraced. As we develop the sharing of information, new systems and upgrades to systems must bear this in mind and employ recognised data, quality and technology standards.

The council must deploy the following standards as a minimum:

- BS7666 for address information
- ISO1799 for information security
- The Data Catalogue Government data standards
- E-Government Metadata Standard is compulsory on all new systems since May 2003. (e.g. web guidelines, metadata etc.)
- BSI – PD0008 Legal Admissibility and Evidential Weight of Information Stored Electronically – Code of Practice

- 7.6 A new technical standard for metadata (of Extensible Markup Language - XML) has been set by Government. This standard is playing an increasingly important role in the exchange of data. This means that we must:

- review the way in which we store metadata
- set the standard for new applications
- develop a plan to migrate existing systems based on the priorities in the e-Government Strategy and any current service plans.
- The council will build on all the above to produce a local standard which delivers our own requirements as well as satisfying national requirements.

For further details on standards see Appendix 4.

Security

- 7.7 District Audit reported recently on our non compliance with BS17799. All the significant elements must be implemented as soon as possible. The requirements set out in Appendix 5. In order to support electronic transactions to handle sensitive information appropriately the Council will develop a security classification system.
- 7.8 The profile of Business Continuity is being raised in the Council and appropriate resources allocated, whether through prioritisation of existing workloads or additional resources.

- 7.9 The information requirements will be documented in order to develop a technical strategy to minimise down time, make best use of storage facilities and reduce restore times, in the case of disaster.
- 7.10 The Council will prioritise the transactions to be made electronic as part of the e-government strategy and so determine when security technologies such as authentication will become critical. This will set the timescale for investigation and implementation of such technology. For more details on security see Appendix 5

Geographical Information

7.11 People are familiar with maps. They offer a simple means of delivering large amounts of complex data in an understandable way. Bringing up a map centred on the location of your choice, with overlays showing just the data that you require, is a terrific way to make sense of information. The IDeA has identified three key data themes for information held by central and local government:

- Places — 85% of information is held by reference to an address
- People — 75% of information is referenced by a person's name, generally including an address
- Organisations — 35-40% of information is referenced by an organisation's name, again generally including an address.

7.12 The geographic approach to information management has many virtues:

- As so much information can be spatially referenced, the GIS is a convenient corporate repository.
- Data objects other than map symbols can be stored in the GIS: these include text documents, building plans, video clips and sound files.
- Experience with linking database structures to GIS systems is mature, and these data management techniques can ease the load of data security and maintenance effort.
- Citizens and elected members know well the geography of where they live, and their perspective on issues and problems is very much centred on their location. Elected members particularly appreciate having information about what is happening within their ward rather than having to trawl through information based upon individual departments or functions.
- Maps are a familiar device for presenting complex but related data.
- Cost and copyright issues in relation to usage of Ordnance Survey (OS) products have largely been resolved.
- Standards in relation both to mapping and local authority spatial information are well developed.

As more departments see the benefits of representing information using maps the strategy development in this area must be more corporate. The Corporate Governance Group will document the current position with GIS and in particular NLPG and NLIS. The Corporate Governance Group will then develop specific plans relating to NLIS and NLPG taking into account to need to work with Districts on these National projects.

KEY MESSAGE 10

The council needs to develop and have approved a Policy for Openness and Transparency. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 11

The council needs to develop and have approved an Information Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 12

The council needs to develop and have approved a Records Management Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 13

The council needs to develop and have approved an E-mail as Records Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 14

The council needs to develop and have approved an Information Management Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 15

The council needs to develop and have approved an approach for adopting standards.

KEY MESSAGE 16

The council needs to develop and have approved a security policy . Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

KEY MESSAGE 17

The council needs to develop and have approved a GIS Strategy and Policy. Ensure it is reviewed at regular intervals.

8. Stakeholders and their Requirements

Partnerships

- 8.1 The number of partnerships involving the Council has increased dramatically over recent years. The Council is currently undertaking an audit of its partnership arrangements, with a view to rationalising them. Once this is complete the strategy will be reviewed in the light of new partnering arrangements. Any resulting data sharing or exchange requirements will be documented and appropriate information sharing protocols will be put in place.
- 8.2 There is an initiative underway with the 7 District Councils in Durham and the County Council with a view to introducing one Customer Relationship Management System for all authorities, amongst other projects. This is being undertaken through the County Durham e-Government Partnership (CDeGP). The detailed plans for all these projects will need to be considered alongside the Information Management Model Action Plan.

Information Requirements

- 8.3 An important element in managing our information assets is understanding what information our stakeholders want and need. The Council has considered this issue and have acknowledged its importance with the introduction of an Information Stock take.
- 8.4 The Council must make best use of existing resources by prioritising surveys to concentrate on support for the Modernisation Programme, e-Government and Best Value. This implies that surveys of Members, "the public", Service Heads and Front-line staff will take priority. Responsibility for co-ordinating surveys will be allocated to one team in the organisation. This will link to the consultation strategy which is currently being developed.

KEY MESSAGE 18

Partnerships are seen by the government as the way forward, especially when Information Sharing is involved. A commitment is needed as to the role Information Management plays in sustaining local partnerships.

9. Communication and Presentation

- 9.1 For communication of information to be successful, there is a reliance on knowing your audience, choosing the correct medium, carefully choosing content, timing the delivery and working with the right partners for distribution. These principles are likely to form a key part of the Council's Communication Strategy. This strategy must support and implement relevant elements of the Communications Strategy.
- 9.2 The Council will pool feedback on the success of distribution methods and develop guidance and a list of approved partners and keep staff informed. In order to communicate effectively with the citizen the Council will always use "Plain English" and apply consistent terminology. It will be the council's aim to publish in paper and electronically simultaneously.
- 9.3 If the council is to maximise the impact of the information it is essential that all staff who are responsible for presentation of material have guidance readily available, have been encouraged to receive training and know when to seek advice from a specialist.
- 9.4 In terms of the internet and Intranet sites, as the volume of information grows, it will be important to make maximum use of advances in technology to maintain adequate control. The key tools to implement will be Electronic Records Management and Web Content Management systems. The web site is has been revamped and is went live in November 2005.
- 9.5 Extranet, the use of internet technologies that would allow partner organisations access to our Intranet, is likely to become necessary. The costs of developing secure extranets are high because of the use of authentication, digital signatures etc. so a business case would need to be made in the future.
- 9.6 The Council needs to look at the work of other Pathfinder authorities, and in particular at the new methods of communication such as Digital TV. The requirements for video on-line across the Council need to be brought together and a business case developed before proceeding.

KEY MESSAGE 19

The council needs to develop and have approved a Communications Strategy and Policy taking into account the principles of Information Management.

10. Organisation

Generating an Information culture

10.1 This strategy is about fundamentally changing the way we manage information and consequently opens up opportunities to deliver services in a different way. As such this represents a change in culture which requires leadership from Members and Chief Officers. In order to be implemented successfully it will require significant support from senior managers and information specialists. The following will need to be addressed:

- Promoting ownership of information throughout the organisation while making information accessible where appropriate.
- There will be a change management plan which raises awareness, promotes the successes, puts in place training and guidance and counteracts the risks identified with this strategy.
- The recruitment of new staff with IM skills gives the organisation an opportunity to progress this strategy.
- Quick wins to change the attitude of people to managing information.
- Provision of robust business cases. Supported by sound business analysis.
- Understanding the current problems better
- Helping to minimise 'Information Overload'
- Opportunities for remote working or teleworking will need to be investigated.

Staff Development

10.2 Key competencies in Information Management need to be agreed and methods of developing the staff to those levels. Information Management responsibilities need to be defined in job descriptions. In particular appropriate staff, from all departments, need to be identified and a programme of development on records management planned within the Council Appendix 6 provides further information on Information Management competencies.

Specialist Information Groups

10.3 There could be a number of specialist information groups operating within the organisation. Better use must be made of their expertise to support staff across the whole Council. In the first instance their expertise and contact details will be published so that potential users are aware of their possible contribution. In the longer term, the council will need to review the groups, and determine whether there are any benefits in positively bringing some of these groups together. In any event better co-ordination between the groups will be necessary.

KEY MESSAGE 20

The council needs to develop a culture of information management within the council

11. Performance in Managing Information

Developing the Model Action Plan

- 11.1 The Strategy's Model Action Plan forms Document 3. Appendix 7 sets out the main lines of action required. The Model Action Plan sets out a phased and incremental approach to addressing the council's responsibilities and improvement requirements. As this is a transformational strategy based on an incremental approach to improvement it is difficult to be precise about timescales, milestones or costs until the management arrangements are in place and the council has completed a stock take of our information holdings. The Model Action Plan is therefore a living document that will be developed and updated regularly, once the Corporate Governance arrangements are fully operational. Performance measurement is vital to focus effort in making the changes and to track progress in realising Chester-le-Street's aspiration to become a leading information and knowledge based organisation. Such an organization expects to see the impact of improved information management on its results. That is the reason for investing in improved information and encouraging its people to treat information as a valuable asset. In principle, achieving the objectives in this Information Management Strategy should contribute to all round performance improvement, and thus the acid test is improved scores in the Performance Management process.

Critical Success Factors for this Strategy

- 11.2 Critical success factors are:

- **Accreditation under ISO 15489 – Records Management**
- **Accreditation under ISO 17799 – Security Management**
- **A constantly up to date list of our information assets.**
- **An ability to respond to any information query within 20 working days.**
- **Quality information (i.e. to a standard)**
- **Information Management is a core feature of the management development programme**
- **Information Management is a core feature of all service reviews and corporate assessment**

Performance Indicators

- 11.3 Future local performance indicators ought to include:

- Percentage of Data Protection Subject Access Requests completed within 40 calendar days.
- Target 100%

- Percentage of Freedom of Information Individual Access Requests completed within 20 working days.

- Target 100%
- Percentage of Environmental Information Requests completed within 20 working days.
- Target 100%
- Number of Notices from the Information Commissioner.
- Target zero.
- Retain top quartileSOCITM ranking
- Retain top 10 ranking in Hitwise (usage statistics).
- Meet AA standard for accessibility

Security Milestones

11.4 Security Milestones will include:

- An up to date, approved Information Security Management Policy.
- A centralised system for recording security breaches. (Performance indicators for decreasing actual incidents can be set once incidents are recorded.).

Geographic data milestone

11.5 The geographical data milestone will be:

- An up to date inventory of geographic data across the Council.

Summary of Model Action Plan

11.6 A summary of the Model Action Plan is as follows:

We Will	By When	Lead
Create, Approve and Communicate an Information Strategy	March 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an Information Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Records Management Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an Openness and Transparency Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate an E-mail as Records Policy	May 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the implementation of a Document Management System for Revenues and Benefits	May 2006	Jayne Henderson

Consider a resource for information management/records management and compliance officer	November 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Corporate Fileplan.	November 2006	Ian Forster
Create, Approve and Communicate a Corporate Retention and Disposal Schedule	November 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the ISO 15489 compliance assessment	November 2006	Ian Forster
ISO 15489 Compliance Review	November 2006	Ian Forster
Complete the implementation of a Document Management System for Planning subject to learning from the Revenues and Benefits project	March 2007	Tom Watson
Complete Detailed Action Plan for Lines of Action subject to decision on information management resource officer	April 2007	Ian Forster
Resource a Corporate EDRMS subject to learning from the previous phase	March 2007	Ian Forster
Implement an EDRMS subject to learning from the previous phase	April 2008	Ian Forster
Implemented a Corporate GIS system	April 2007	Ian Forster
Develop a Security Policy and Review	April 2008	Ian Forster
Develop a GIS Policy and Strategy and Review	April 2008	Ian Forster
Engaged with the Durham Partnership on Information Management funding	ongoing	Graeme Clark

KEY MESSAGE 21

The council needs to ensure that the Strategy is performance managed to ensure that it achieves its aims.

12. Risk

12.1 The main risks to the council are:

- Being unable to secure the consistent commitment of senior management and staff to this Information Management strategy and the delivery of the action plan.
- Insufficient funding - There are certainly cost implications and these will need to be given appropriate consideration.
- Non-compliance with the law.
- Difficulties in partnering, as data is not held to appropriate standards
- Being judged as not corporate on information management (CPA)

12.2 A detailed Risk Assessment is provided in Appendix 8

13 Monitoring and Reviewing the Implementation of the Strategy

- 13.1 Strategies rapidly become obsolete unless constantly reviewed and adjusted as part of a permanent strategic management process. The Corporate Governance Group will maintain the currency of Chester-le-Street Information Management Strategy, involving stakeholders and other emerging groups where this is appropriate or necessary.
- 13.2 The work on Information Governance will consider the intimate relationship between this strategy and wider Departmental strategic planning and management processes. It is essential that The Information Management Strategy, and its on-going implementation and maintenance processes, are integrated fully into the wider corporate and services planning processes; to inform and be informed by, the operational and business imperatives of the day and to ensure that managers and staff at all levels are aware of how information can support and enhance the delivery of Chester-le-street outputs.
- 13.3 The vehicle for implementation of the Strategy is the Model Action Plan; this will encompass the required activities and comprise a set of specific tasks with priorities, time-scales, dependencies and responsibilities. This more detailed planning work will enable the costs and benefits of strategy implementation to be determined and allow strategy funding requirements to be matched against current resource provision within the Short and Medium Term, so that any gaps and overlaps can be identified and investment priorities agreed.
- 13.4 Implementation of Chester-le-Street Information Management Strategy will not be cost neutral. There will be some need to invest in order to exploit the information and co-evolution opportunities and to meet the objectives set ourselves, or been given, in the Government drivers. Changes are inevitable and essential and will be detailed through the implementation work, engaging all interested stakeholders.
- 13.5 As the implementation of this strategy proceeds and a coherent picture of Chester-le-Street's overall information assets and priorities for investment develops, increasingly quantitative assessments for the costs and benefits should be possible and details of our performance relative to best practice become available. Transparency of the resources expended on information related capability through Chester-le-Street is essential to developing the coherent picture.
- 13.6 Using information effectively reduces reliance on capital investment and is an increasingly important factor in the commercial sector as the use of e-business techniques spreads. In the operational context the benefits of timely and accurate information are well known and historically proven.

KEY MESSAGE 22

The council needs to consider whether it requires an Information Management / Records Manager / Compliance Officer to administer and act as Information Champion with the council.

Glossary of Terms

Business classification scheme

An articulation of the functions and activities of the organisation derived from the analysis of business activity. The business classification scheme contains terms and scope notes that represent and describe functions, activities, transactions or other elements, and shows their relationships. The number of levels within the scheme can vary depending on the level of refinement required and how the scheme will be used. The structure of the scheme is hierarchical, moving from the general to the specific. Each function has activities that are identified in relation to it, and each activity (linked to the function) has categories of transactions that are encountered.

Custodian

Custodianship is a core departmental role that cannot be outsourced. Custodianship involves setting the standards and specifications for managing primary information.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing decisions on whether information is no longer required or necessary to retain. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.

Document – A document is taken to be a minimum unit of paper (or its electronic equivalent) used by the Council. Where not otherwise specified (see electronic document below), a document includes paper and electronic formats as well as emails, video, audio tapes etc.

eGIF, government interoperability framework, the technical standards that enable all government systems to work together, see <http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/schemasstandards/egif.asp>

Electronic Document – An electronic document is a document that has been captured within the Council Infrastructure ie Outlook, N:Drive, Q:Drive etc and electronic document management system. It therefore applies to documents generated in-house, scanned images of paper documents and emails.

Evidence

Information that tends to prove a fact. Not limited to the legal sense of the term.

File – A file is a collection of documents – either a physical file of paper documents or a notional collection of electronic documents with a common theme.

Function

The largest unit of business activity in an organisation or jurisdiction. Functions represent the major responsibilities that are managed by the organisation to fulfil its goals. Functions are high-level aggregates of the organisation's activities. A discrete area of operational or housekeeping responsibility, administered by an organisation, over a period.

Geographic Information System (GIS):

A system of hardware and software used for storage, retrieval, mapping, and analysis of geographic data. A GIS can be as complex as whole systems using dedicated databases and workstations hooked up to a network, or as simple as "off-the-shelf" desktop software. A GIS is able to combine and overlay separate layers of geographic data, making it a valuable tool for organizations needing to map and analyse spatial information.

Record – ‘a specific piece of information produced or received in the initiation, conduct or deletion of an institutional or individual activity, and that comprises sufficient content, context and structure to provide evidence of an activity’

LOB application

A line of business application e.g. the system used to manage planning applications of environmental services requests for service.

Metadata

Is data about data and therefore provides basic information such as the author of a work, date of creation, links to any related works etc. An example of metadata is a card index catalogue in a library; the information on the card is metadata about a book
Structured information that describes and/or allows us to find, manage, control, understand or preserve other information over time.

- MoC** Management of Change
- NLIS** National Land Information Service
- NLPG** National Land and Property Gazetteer

Ownership

The Crown is the owner of all government, Central and Local) held information on behalf of the public

PD0008

A BSI code of practice for the Legal Admissibility and Evidential Weight of information stored electronically.

Recordkeeping

Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information. Recordkeeping includes the following:

- the creation of records in the course of business activity and the means to ensure the creation of adequate records;

- the design, establishment and operation of recordkeeping systems; and
- the management of records used in business

Records

Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

Recorded information, in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.

Records Management

Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.

The discipline and organisational function of managing records to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations.

Retention Schedule

A set of instructions allocated to a folder to determine the length of time for which the folder should be retained by the organisation for business purposes and the eventual fate of the folder on completion of this period of time.

Transaction

The smallest unit of business activity.

A transaction should be activity-based rather than subject- or topic-based. A transaction provides the basis for identifying, in detail, the records that meet the business needs of the organisation. Depending on the complexity of an organisation's business activities, it may be necessary to group transactions on the basis of their similarities or to further dissect this level to obtain an appropriate degree of specificity for the organisation's recordkeeping purposes.

A particular instance in the performance of an activity. In some cases, the term transaction is used to cover a class of transactions that occur in the performance of an activity.

Appendix 1 - Hawley Committee proposals

The Board of Directors should address its responsibilities for information assets in the same way as for other assets - e.g. property, plant. This implies a new approach to how information should be treated and requires a Board to make clear to management what actions it wishes to be taken and who is responsible for action and compliance.

The Board should satisfy itself that its own business is conducted so that:-

- The information it uses is necessary and sufficient for its purpose.
- It is aware of and properly advised on the information aspects of all the subjects on its agenda.
- Its use of information, collectively and individually, complies with applicable laws, regulations and recognised ethical standards.

The Board should determine the organisation's policy for information assets and identify how compliance with that policy will be measured and reviewed, including:-

- The identification of information assets and the classification into those of value and importance that merit special attention and those that does not.
- The quality and quantity of information for effective operation, ensuring that, at every level, the information provided is necessary and sufficient, timely, reliable and consistent.
- The proper use of information in accordance with applicable legal, regulatory, operational and ethical standards, and the roles and responsibilities for the creation, safekeeping, access, change and destruction of information.
- The capability, suitability and training of people to safeguard and enhance information assets.
- The protection of information from theft, loss, unauthorised access, abuse and misuse, including information which is the property of others.
- The harnessing of information assets and their proper use for the maximum benefit of the organisation including legally protecting, licensing, re-using, combining, re-presenting, publishing and destroying.
- The strategy for information systems, including those using computers and electronic the costs, benefits and risks arising.

Appendix 2 – Technology

This section is in alphabetical order, not in order of importance.

A2.1 Application Service Providers

The idea of data hosting is being expanded by Application Service Provider companies who provide "rented" applications. It will be possible to buy computing power and applications from a 3rd party supplier and pay by usage just like for electricity.

A2.2 Archiving

A key issue is the ability to restore all necessary data quickly in the event of a disaster. A way of reducing the amount of data to be backed up daily is to store some off-line, as a half way house to eventual deletion or permanent archive. There is appropriate technology to cater for this approach.

There are companies who specialise in hosting data. The Council should keep a watching brief on the progression of such initiatives. The main issues in letting a contract would be the security measures along with disaster recovery issues.

A2.3 Customer Relationship Management

These products achieve the following:

- A comprehensive database of customers/citizens

- Document the transactions the customers are undertaking

- Correct contact addresses

- An ability to share customer data between different parts of the organisation

This type of product may become necessary as a result of e-Government and would sit neatly alongside the NLPG, the national register of addresses and property information. A county-wide call centre would be an essential tool in supporting front-line staff and collecting statistical information on take up of services electronically.

A2.4 Data mining

These tools are associated with data warehousing products and are used to trawl databases and collate trend information. The technology is based on Neural Networks, which is particularly good at recognition of patterns. Other applications for neural network software might be for forecasting based on historical data, and also for recognition software e.g. security based on physical appearance. A possible requirement may be for Optical Character Recognition software as part of a scanning application in connection with Document Management.

Neural network technology should not be investigated unless there is a definite requirement.

A2.5 Data warehousing

This is a tool which enables data to be taken from operational systems and stored. It will then be trawled looking for trends or matches of data to support future direction. The idea is to capture a wide variety of information but with common referencing systems. It is particularly useful in highlighting issues which may be ex-organisational. The tool is

particularly useful in conjunction with a Geographical Information System (GIS) for displaying results. This technology is in the same category as Executive Information Systems. This would require a definition of requirements and an analysis of the marketplace. Further requirements may be identified as a result of "joined up" working projects from the e-Government strategy.

A2.6 Digital Objects Repository

Repository for all digital objects (video, sound, photos etc.) In the future the Council will want to store material such as video and sound recordings as well as photographs. We need a storage mechanism which will cater for all these different digital items. Microsoft SQL Server is the Council's current database standard, but it may be wise to visit the marketplace to determine whether this is the most cost effective tool. A Digital Objects Repository should become a priority to research only when a need is identified to store such material as part of the e-Government Strategy or Service Plans.

A2.7 Digital TV

The Government sees digital TV as one way of reaching some of the poorer families. Bristol CC did some research and found that 38% of families in the poorer areas had access to Digital TV. The Government is also keen to cease analogue TV by 2007. It seems likely that this may be a key method of communication. The Council needs to look at the work of other pathfinder authorities.

A2.8 Document Management & Electronic Records Management Systems

The Council has spent much of its ICT resources catering for structured data i.e. that which can be analysed and put into tabular form. This has been done in the form of databases. However, less than 10% of an organisation's information is structured. The vast majority is unstructured text, graphics, sound, video etc.

Document management is the product which supports unstructured data through its entire life cycle. It will be used with paper documents which are scanned or from original electronic files. It comprises many facilities, such as controlled booking in/out of files, version control, structured filing, ability to index in complex ways, plus search engines to retrieve data easily and the ability to display using internet technologies.

There is a subtle but defined difference between document management and records management. Electronic records management systems require additional features to document management such as secure storage and management to ensure accountability including support for legal and regulatory requirements, and the ability to store complex documents e.g. e-mails with attachments. The marketplace is taking this on board with many document management systems now offering ERM facilities.

The good news is that Government has developed a specification for ERM which will be used as a benchmark for our procurement. In addition currently available software packages will be tested against the specification and will be made available through the G-CAT catalogue, thus enabling us to buy without tendering independently through EU, if we so choose.

Council's have adopted this technology in the battle to manage the paper mountain and effectively manage large volumes of files. It is also appropriate for low volume but highly controlled documents such as QA manuals. Using funding from DWP the Revenues and

Benefits section have embarked upon an EDRMS which can be adopted for corporate use.

A2.9 Enterprise Information Portals (EIP)

The characteristic of an EIP system is the ability to personalise information to a particular user or group of users. These tools would give us the capability to customise an Intranet site, in particular, using the functions of pushing or pulling data as appropriate. The systems support workflow technologies which will allow on-line processing, improved search and navigation and the use of collaborative tools such as calendar, etc. By deploying EIP the Intranet becomes the desktop.

EIP is a relatively new area of technology and so the market place is relatively immature with more recent offerings coming from the big names e.g. ORACLE, MS & IBM. This area will become increasingly important over the next couple of years. Durham County Council and the six District Councils will need to develop a portal for Durham.

A2.10 Encryption & Authentication

These technologies will become important to the Council as e-Government gets underway. In order for the citizen to transact through the web, it will be necessary to verify, in some cases, who they are. This will be done by smart cards or by PIN numbers for instance.

In addition, the citizen may well be providing sensitive information or we may be sharing sensitive information with other organisations we need to scramble the data during transmission to prevent it being intercepted and deciphered. This technology is known as encryption.

A2.11 Extranet

In order to limit the access a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) is recommended by the Butler Group for Extranets. This contains user profiles that will be stored but retrieved from any point on the Extranet, providing appropriate access rights for everyone.

A2.12 GIS

Currently under development in the organisation.

A2.13 Intelligent agents

These products are extensions to the concept of a web-wide search engine. They are given a set of requirements and go into the web trying to match information to the criteria supplied e.g. find the best price for x. Some apparently have some limitations in that they do not delve down into databases held on websites. This will become a disadvantage in the longer term as more sites are moving to dynamically updating their web by putting their databases on-line. So, for instance it would not find changes in legislation on the Data Protection site because their files are all stored in a database. That is not to say that there are not valid uses for such products and there is potential to save staff time and reduce procurement costs. It is anticipated that many routine tasks such as re-ordering supplies, making bookings etc. will be carried out by Intelligent agents. The topic needs to be raised by the ICT manager with section heads. Requirements for Intelligent Agents need to be collated, a business case made before appropriate tools are sought and made available.

A2.14 Metadata

Data which describes a stored data set is called metadata. This will be data such as date updated, author, expiry date, category, in the case of text documents. In the case of a structured database the metadata forms a road map of the stored information e.g. name (40 characters), date of birth (4 digit year, 2 digit month, 2 digit day). This road map is called a schema.

Metadata will be stored in a database of its own, separate from the stored data set. This provides the advantage of many applications having access to the metadata for the purpose of presentation or searching.

A2.15 Metadirectory

This is a relatively new technology allowing existing directories to be linked together. This type of product may help in the automation of certain processes such as registering a new starter in the organisation in all the appropriate systems.

The authority is currently a partner of the County-side CRM system. This is being actively implemented at present with service requests planned to be configured throughout 2006. This implementation is based on a 'wide and thin' implementation, a 'wide' number of services being implemented across the full range of services across the council and 'thin' implementation of taking the initial front office service request from the public without integration to back office systems. The back office integration is planned as a Phase II project for CRM. As part of the Phase II project for integration the authority will shortly be exploring the integration options to back office systems. This investigation will form a full project for the County Durham E-Government Partnership and will look at the different forms and advantages and disadvantages of integration; point to point, LgoNet Messaging and Oracle Integration Framework Architecture.

A2.16 Text Retrieval Engines

The Council currently uses the Microsoft IIS product as a search engine on the Internet and Intranet websites. To date the product has proved "flaky". Search engines will become more important as our webs grow and will become more ingrained in our working methods, it would be well advised to put resources into improving the existing tool or reviewing alternatives. The benefit of a good document management system is that powerful search algorithms are available.

A2.17 Video Conferencing

Video conferencing has been around for many years and has improved in quality in that time. Further requirements for video conferencing are likely to come from the e-Government strategy and should only be actioned when there is a benefit case and there is evidence that the public or staffs is likely to use the facility.

A2.18 Video on-line

This can be used in a number of scenarios. For instance, to run coverage of committee meetings, as a promotional tool on the website, and as a learning tool on the Intranet. This technology is available but would have significant impact on the network, if applied on the Intranet and may also incur higher charge rates with the host of our website. There

have been indications that certain service areas are interested in using it for training staff. The requirements for video on-line across the Council need to be brought together and a business case developed before proceeding.

A2.19 Web Content Management Systems

These products are specific to websites. Essentially these products would allow the ICT section to specify the structure of the web, into sections and sub sections with defined links. They enable authors to submit material electronically to a central control unit. The queue of work is viewed by staff allocated to maintain the structure of the web. The first time a document is received, it is allocated a place in the structure and a filename which is reported back to the author. From then on the system recognises updated versions of documents and assigns the location automatically and only requires confirmation, thus speeding up the process of posting information.

Many of the features of the system e.g. standard templates and structure are in place now but are managed in a very manual way with existing tools. Content management systems automate the process of posting information much more than using our existing systems outlined under web site management, development and authoring tools. For instance the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister use a system called POPI to manage their site and there are many other offerings in the marketplace. These systems often come as a sub-set of Electronic Records Management systems.

The Council needs to review the technology which supports web authoring and site management with a view to streamlining the process and prevent incurring the cost of additional staff.

A2.20 Web management and development tools

The Council currently uses Goss Interactive Content Management System as the web management/development tool.

A2.21 Web authoring tools

Currently material for the web is authored using standard tools such as WORD and EXCEL. The downside of this is for the material to be universally viewable; it has to be converted to Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML), a current international standard for web presentation.

To do this we use Dreamweaver. This requires considerable manual effort and as records require "tweaking" to make them look presentable in HTML, there are always two versions to be stored. The updates generally take place on the web version as it is a lot of work to keep adding links to original documents. This means in effect that the authoring has "moved" from the originator to the web conversion staff. This situation may improve with the implementation of Office XP where documents will be saved in HTML without having to be converted. The issue of adding links still remains however.

Documents are presented in PDF format, if their style needs to be preserved. This is the standard promoted by the Public Records Office for the long term storage of "records". However, this is a particularly unfriendly format for use on the web. It is very inflexible and

the value of the web in linking between elements of a document is denied in this format. To read these documents a product called Adobe Acrobat is required.

A2.22 Web search engines

Along with the search engine integral to our web sites, we will make use of search engines to search the whole of the internet. The Council has identified some of these, but the list is continually growing. We have also added to the list search engines which search other search engines to get quicker answers. e.g. metacrawler. This is a form of intelligent agent.

A2.23 XML

Extensible Markup Language (XML) is the new Government standard for metadata. It is a new version of HTML which is currently used extensively on websites. It has additional features, particularly in respect of metadata and aims to separate the meaning of data from its format. The adoption of this standard will have particular impact on our webs which currently use HTML as a standard.

The Council needs to investigate the migration plan to XML for Internet as a matter of urgency. The number of files on the site is growing daily, so it is important to make the transition early. The usual process is to then convert the intranet.

The government & IDeA are developing a series of schemas (technical descriptions of how data is stored) for data which is common and we will be required to use those schemas. The Council must ensure that all new data bases are XML compliant and the latest XML schemas are always used.

The proposed inventory will not be one massive database with all of our information in it. It will be a list of all the titles and locations of information assets which are held in a variety of sources which range from simple documents to large databases. Detailed guidance will be developed by the ICT section. The inventory will be structured in a way which will support the Freedom Of Information Publication Scheme. We have at least 40 separate systems containing address information which is clearly an overhead to maintain and creating a catalogue will help us identify duplication.

Examples of data sets we need to collate are:

- list of Council publications
- forms used by the public
- property related data
- people related data etc.
- list of consultation exercises
- list of County Council partnerships
- list of statues covering Council business
- list of key reference material e.g. BSI

It will be important to ensure that the catalogue will allow the data-sets to be categorised in a number of ways.

The Data Protection inventory will hold the local details of data sets collected by the authority and the purposes for it's use. This local data set will reflect the register of data help by the Data Protection Registrar for the authority.

It is difficult and will take resources to capture all data-sets and maintain the inventory effectively.

Information has a value and the IDeA is developing markets for Local Government information as part of the Information House initiative. The capacity for selling information will need to be carefully balanced against a number of factors, including the risk of the right people not being capable of receiving it.

It is necessary to know what information we have in order to assess its value in terms of need, cost and of potential for income. We need to know who else may value our information but legal advice needs to be sought on the legal restrictions on use of data we collect.

Appendix 3. – Records Management

The life cycle of a piece of information covers many phases:

Create/capture

Index/Organise/structure

Store

Retrieve/present

Use

Control/make and keep security

Amend

Review (with a view to archive or delete)

Archive

Dispose

The Government had set a target that by 2004 all newly created public records would be electronically stored and retrieved. This is an area where Document Management/Electronic Records Management technology ought to be of value. The Council has to keep many "records" such as Council Minutes, Invoices etc., many currently in paper format. This product would prevent inappropriate changes to these sorts of documents. In addition a system which includes work flow would be particularly beneficial in controlling the "flow" of these documents, not physically, but in terms of the processes carried out on them.

One key aspect to good record management is staff understanding its relevance and importance. There is a Public Records Office (PRO) sponsored programme of education and training in records and information management. This supports the concept of Investing in People and rewarding staff with professional qualifications.

As the volume of information grows, it is becoming more and more difficult to manage it and retrieve. The concept of managing the vast quantities of unstructured information which the Council possesses is impractical. Many authorities and private sector organisations have invested in an electronic records management system as they have concluded that this is the only sensible way of managing their information in the 21st century.

One of the benefits of an ERM system is that it is possible to hold data about data (metadata). This means that individual pieces of information have a tag associated with them which contains key pieces of information and which can be used to enable a search facility to quickly retrieve the document.

This implies use of templates to capture data, agreed coding structures and categorisation for filing information to enable easy retrieval. Classification of information is particularly important for security purposes.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the Freedom Of Information Act there will need to be an inventory of all public information held by the Council. A comprehensive publication scheme will minimise the overall cost of provision of information to the public by reducing the number of individual requests for information not in the scheme. The individual requests must have a response within 20 working days.

The proposed inventory will not be one massive database with all of our information in it. It will be a list of all the titles and locations of information assets which are held in a variety of sources which range from simple documents to large databases. Detailed guidance will be developed by the CGG. The inventory will be structured in a way which will support the Freedom Of Information Publication Scheme. Examples of data sets we need to collate are:

list of Council publications

forms used by the public

property related data

people related data etc.

list of consultation exercises

list of County Council partnerships

list of statues covering Council business

list of key reference material e.g. BSI

Appendix 4. - Standards

The key topics for integration and sharing according to SOCITM are :

People
Places
Organisations

Standards should be applied to these in the first instance. In order to focus effort on supporting the modernising programme and e-Government, the standards outlined below have been identified as essential ingredients:

The government is developing a Data Catalogue, which contains specifications for the storage of data items commonly used across government. This will describe how data will be defined within computer programmes and will help greatly with data consistency and data sharing initiatives.

The government is developing metadata guidelines for topics which cut across all government while the IDEa is developing metadata specifically for local authorities and we need to develop plans to comply.

The Council will need to introduce national data standards such as BS7666 for address data. This will enable the Council to integrate with National projects such as National Land & Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and the National Land and Information Service (NLIS), in accordance with the aspirations in our e-Government strategy.

We are required to comply with a number of government standards relating to information and the technology which supports it. For instance we must comply with guidelines on web, call centres, security, interoperability, metadata, electronic records management and information management. To date there has been no consistent approach to compliance within the Council.

Where standards do not exist we will need to develop standards internally and in conjunction with our partners to facilitate sharing of information.

In the past systems have been developed, particularly by Government which try to be all embracing and which generally are extremely costly and have not produced the goods. It should not be assumed therefore that everything needs connecting. We should only do so in the interests of the customer. However, applying standards all the time makes it simple to connect when there is a case for doing so.

Appendix 5. – Security

District Audit point out that all information should be classified according to security risk. This covers manual data, including correspondence, electronic databases and e-mails. There are Government guidelines on Security and in particular Authentication of electronic transactions which also need to be taken into account when defining a classification system for the Council. This classification by risk is also important for our Internet arrangements.

There is a need to build in resilience into our data storage methods. For instance as the volume of data on the Intranet grows and it becomes the first point of access to Council data we do not want to be in a position where that data is unavailable due to "down time". Similarly, as we increasingly deal directly with the citizen, updating systems on-line, in real time, we can not afford down time.

Under the Electronic Communications Act 2000, electronic signatures became admissible in law. With the coming of e-Government it is highly likely that electronic signatures will be used when applying for services over the Internet for example. The implication for the Council is that we will require authentication/certification technology along with encryption technology for sensitive data. Such developments will need to link to both our e-Government Strategy and our overall approach to record management.

Appendix 6. Information Management Competency Framework

This information has been extracted from the Public Record Office (PRO) Competence Framework. It is an example of the sort of framework the Council needs to develop to support staff managing information. Our framework will need to be developed in conjunction with the Personnel Section and must fit within the overall competency framework developed by the Council as part of its organisational development

The PRO framework consists of 3 elements:

- **Core Competencies** - these are competencies relating to a records management organisation's strategic priorities and values. They will be applicable to all records management staff.
- **Managerial Competencies** - these competencies reflect the managerial activity and performance required in certain records management roles.
- **Functional Competencies** - these describe the role-specific abilities required and usually relate to professional or technical skills.

Each PRO competency has levels:

- **Learner** - requires some support; just beginning to need to demonstrate the competence
- **Threshold** - able to perform most aspects of a competence without supervision
- **Excellent:** - consistently demonstrate very good performance in most aspects of the competence; coaching others in the competence is an important part of this level
- **Expert** - demonstrate outstanding performance in a competence at a complex level; viewed as superior by others (within the organisation and outside it); create the environment in which others can succeed in the competence

Application of the Framework in the PRO:

Common roles are defined within the organisation, such as Records Clerk, Records Manager etc. Each role in a records management unit can be described in terms of a 'competence profile' which indicates:

The competencies required in the job (selected from the framework)
The level of a competence which must be demonstrated in that job

Job specifications are designed principally to aid managers in the recruitment of suitable staff. They can, however, also be used to set out performance management plans with staff at the beginning of each business year and, in conjunction with performance assessments, be used to identify training and development requirements.

Person specifications draw directly on the competence framework. It specifies those skills required for the job and the level at which they should be pitched.

Each member of the records management function should have a development plan, drawn up on the basis of a comparison between their skills and the competencies necessary for their role. Such a plan should be guided by the department's strategic priorities. The plan should be drawn up at the beginning of each business year, in conjunction with the performance management plan for the individual. It should identify the skills which are to be developed, the methods used to develop them, the contribution that this development will make to the department's corporate objectives and criteria for the evaluation of the success of the development activity.

The PRO approach fits with the Council's approach to recruitment and the Appraisal Scheme.

For more information on a competency framework for records management, see the Public Records Office site. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/>

Appendix 7 - Draft Lines of Action Plan

Six principal strategic lines of action have been identified to address the information aspects of the Chester-le-Street operational and business drivers and provide a framework for achieving the benefits and avoiding the penalties of the information age. Each is considered in turn below.

Line of Action – 1

MANAGE OUR INFORMATION

Information must be managed as a corporate asset within a structured framework. A systematic and structured approach to information management, including research and analytical processes, will enable our information assets to be used productively. It will also assist in dealing with potential litigation action and provide support to the achievement of CLS objectives, including its statutory obligations in respect of Public Records, public access under the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations.

In the future, CLS information must be created in a way that facilitates its exploitation and our business processes, individual behaviours, training, and risk management approach must all reflect this. There must be a strategic assumption that all CLS information is shareable within an appropriate security framework.

The key to delivering this objective is to develop a better understanding of where decisions need to be made and of the supporting processes and information needs, for example, fulfilling the information requirements of the CLS Performance Management process.

Underpinning much of this line of action will be the information life cycle which will be pragmatically and systematically applied to enable information management.

Line of Action - 2

BE JOINED-UP INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

CLS must provide a range of information access and exchange services that support greater joined-up working between the constituent parts of the authority, external stakeholders and the rest of Government. Greater information accessibility within a better-connected environment can be achieved by various means, including:

- a. of fundamental importance, establishing a CLS Information Asset Register / EDRMS where CLS-wide information can be shared within the stakeholder community;
- b. greater coherence of applications as common business and operational processes exploit the same best practice available from Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) software, and data and other information standards unify to enable nuclear community exploitation.

The move to greater joined-up information must be accompanied by consideration of potential increased risk to operational and business processes. This is considered in Line of Action 6.

Line of Action - 3

GIVE OUR PEOPLE THE RIGHT SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

CLS must ensure that it has access to appropriately skilled, competent, and well-motivated staff if it is to be able to implement the CLS Information Management Strategy. Hence we must identify the specific skills required to implement the strategy.

This objective may well present the most significant implementation challenges, affecting the way that individuals and groups think and work; from the very highest levels of the Authority downwards.

Related to developing and sustaining changes to attitudes and culture is the issue of "knowledge", which is an attribute of people which enables them to make expert and effective judgements on the basis of the information, presented to them. Focused effort is needed to capture and exploit our peoples' experience, skills and competence levels to enable CLS to improve its credentials in knowledge-based working.

Line of Action - 4

ESTABLISH AN INFORMATION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

In order to exploit its information assets fully, CLS must put in place an effective governance regime comprising management processes, structures, roles, responsibilities, and control mechanisms to take forward the planning and management of the constituent parts, as well as the totality, of the Information Management Strategy. The governance framework must be capable of allowing information requirements to be captured; enabling investment priorities to be determined based on quality planning information, so that the right decisions are made concerning the investments in information capabilities; and providing support for the procurement of information capabilities in a timely, cost-effective, coherent and controlled manner, without being overly specified. It must allow the resource needs of the Strategy to be identified and prioritised. It must also allow the impact of the Information Management Strategy on the Authority to be monitored and measured using meaningful performance indicators so that areas for improvement can be identified and acted upon.

Overall responsibility for the new information governance framework will rest with the Assistant Chief Executive, although its operation will be delegated as appropriate.

Line of Action 5

ACHIEVE THE MODERNISING GOVERNMENT AIMS AND TARGETS

In common with other public sector bodies, CLS must meet Information Age Government targets for electronic service delivery as a means of improving the quality and availability of services to the public and to business.

In addition, CLS must also respond to other initiatives emanating from e-Government agenda.

In this, as with all of the other Lines of Development, it should be remembered that the focus is on information in the round, and not just on the technology aspects. Records, libraries, documents, research, archives, and all information processes and resources must be deployed in achieving our objectives.

Line of Action 6

ESTABLISH THE RISK BALANCE

In moving towards the strategic outcome, CLS must continue to balance the business benefits to be achieved from greater joined-up working with the inherent risk of operational and business information or activities being compromised as a result of connecting our systems into a larger and more diverse community of interests. Equally as we become increasingly dependent on information systems and technologies, provision will need to be made to judge and mitigate risks

CLS must ensure that it has the means of monitoring threats to its information, and of detecting and responding quickly and effectively to incidents, including deliberate electronic attacks when they occur. These systems and procedures must address the full spectrum of Departmental activity, must be flexible and responsive to changes in the threat.

In so doing, business and operationally driven balances must be struck between exploiting the opportunities of the information, protecting our information and sustaining processes which rely on information. Judgements on the balance between sharing information, protection of information and maintaining robust services will have a profound impact on how the strategy is realised.

Appendix 8 - Detailed Risk Assessment

Type of Risk	Description	Impact	Probability	Risk Management
Organisational	Lack of Commitment	H	H	CGG with support from Chief Officers and Senior Mangers Put actions into Departmental Business Plans Lead officer in each department on key topics
	Issues in staff accepting a corporate approach, feeling that their needs may not be addressed (Silo mentality)	H	H	Departmental representation at senior level on CGG Awareness raising on benefits of approach
	Staff responsibilities for information management not defined	H	H	Identify staff through information audit and amend job descriptions and person specifications accordingly
	Information management not seen as important	H	H	Need a programme to change culture, need to identify current problems and explain the benefits of change to gain commitment
	Insufficient emphasis on presentation and communication	H	H	Use appropriate forms of communication. Use Citizens Panel & Mori to survey public Use complaints/compliments process to improve service Think about electronic means as well
	Seen as an extra	H	H	Training and explanation of the benefits
	Legal requirements viewed as being "barriers"	H	H	Training & awareness raising
	The training is for the "chosen", rather than the masses	H	M	General awareness training
	No resources for developing metadata, and training			Additional posts or contract staff to supply expertise Input from departments

	departmental staff. Issues if metadata is not developed consistently across the whole organisation			
Funding	No corporate budget	H	H	Benefits cases to CMT
	No pump priming money to get started	H	H	Bids to pressures budget, IEG etc.
	Don't like paying for analysis work	H	H	Raise awareness of benefits
Assets	No audit of our holdings undertaken, leading to gaps in info, duplication etc.	H	M	CMT Report on benefits, Workshop approach with expert help given to departments
	Inconsistent collection of the audit material	H	H	Corporate standards for the data collection
	No general understanding of what a "record" is	H	H	Training, awareness raising
	No plans in place	H	H	Develop plans
Operational	More time taken to update & retrieve data	H	H	ERM system
	Unreliable information	H	M	Standards
	Not all departments making full use of the intranet, leading to duplication of data and additional costs	H	H	Only make some data available on intranet
Technology	Ad Hoc developments leading to increased support costs Particularly important to be consistent for audit of information holdings	H	H	Corporate approach through IT Board

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