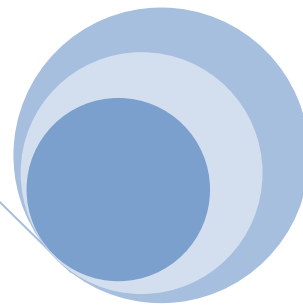
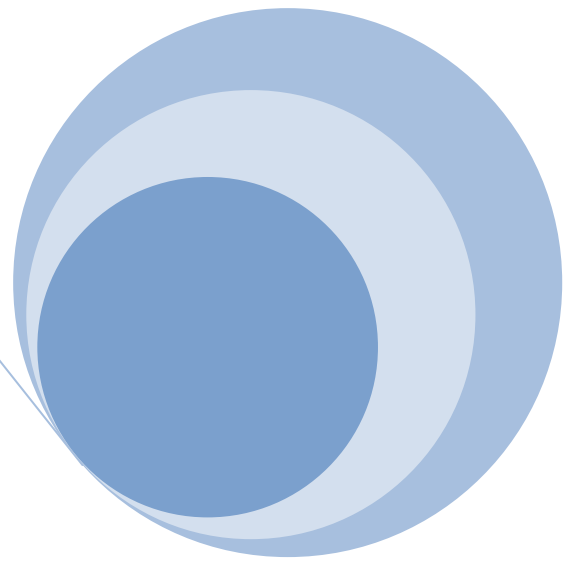


Appendix A
OSMB 6th October 2009
Information Strategy

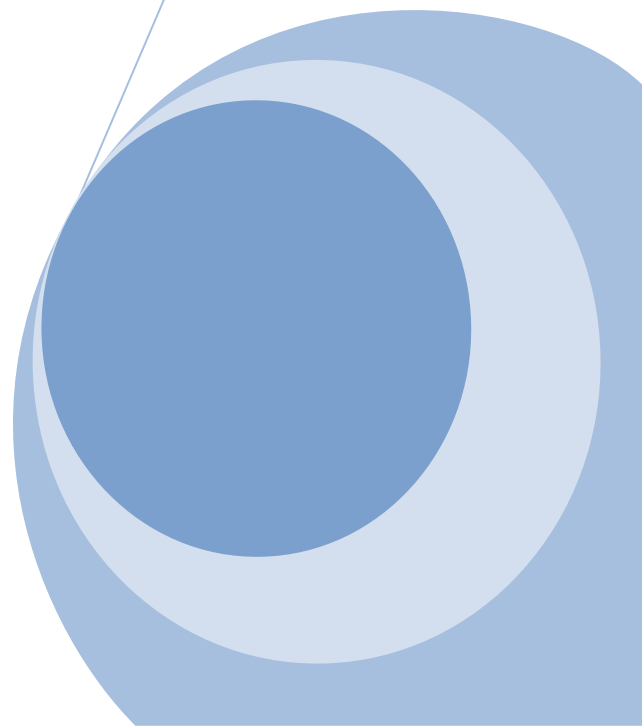


Solihull Council's

Information Strategy

This document describes a 3 year strategy which provides an 'executive steer' for the promotion, effective management and use of information across the organisation, recognising its value as a corporate resource for the delivery of Council priorities and improved customer services.

Version 1.0



Version Control

Title:	Solihull Council's Information Strategy
Version:	1.0
Document type:	Final
Prepared by:	Steve Halliday Head of ICT Services
Approved by:	Cabinet Member for Resources, Information Strategy Board & Operations Leadership Team (OLT)
Review date:	Annual refresh with a complete re-write in 3 years
Circulation:	All employees

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
0.1	21 April 2009	Steve Halliday, Commissioning review with: Mark Rogers, Philip Lloyd-Williams, Phil Mayhew, Paul Johnson, Steve Halliday.	First draft consolidating consultation with CMT, OMT and related stakeholders.
0.2	22 April 2009	Ian Ash, Steve Halliday.	Review and revision.
0.3	23 April 2009	Steve Halliday.	Further detail added.
0.4	24 April 2009	Ian Ash, Kim Silcock-Thomas, Steve Halliday.	Further clarity around purpose audience and style. Examples of benefits and outcomes added.
0.5	28 April 2009	Paul Johnson, Steve Halliday.	Benefits developed, baseline objective clarified.
0.6	29 April 2009	Steve Halliday.	Further detail completed.
0.7	1 May 2009	Steve Fenton, Ann Habens, Tracey Cox, Kim Silcock-Thomas, Ian Ash, Steve Halliday.	Review and priorities workshop.
0.8	6 May 2009	Alan Colson, Alasdair Bullivant, Andrew Kirk, Grant Olwagen, Hilary Staton, John Court, John Lees, Martin Gomberg, Paul Jennings,	ICT Management Team review.

		Steve Halliday.	
0.9	15 May 2009	Phil Mayhew, Steve Halliday.	Commissioning review.
0.10	20 May 2009	Paul Johnson Steve Halliday	Finance review.
0.11	3 June 2009	Philip Lloyd-Williams Steve Halliday	Corporate Governance review.
0.12	16 June 2009	Andrew Shipway, Ian Ash, Dawn Waller, Steve Halliday.	Information Governance Team review.
0.13	29 June 2009	Kim Silcock Thomas Steve Elliott Deborah Martin-Williams Adrian Cattell Sam Gilbert Steve Sparkes Ann Habens Andrew Shipway Steve Halliday	Received OMT Approval, subject to Sam Gilbert who had not had time to review properly.
0.14	2 July 2009	Sam Gilbert,	Revision to efficiency savings.
0.15	27 Aug 2009	Andrew Shipway, Steve Halliday	Minor typo's amended and addition of Information Champion in Information Strategy Board Section
0.16	2 Sept 2009	Paul Johnson Philip Lloyd-Williams Phil Mayhew Jim Harte Steve Fenton Caroline Lewis Andrew Shipway Steve Halliday	Initial Meeting of Information Strategy Board
0.17	21 Sept 2009	Cllr K Hawkins Cllr I Hedley	Approval to recommend to OSMB at Resources Cabinet
0.18	6 Oct 2009	Cllrs I Hillas (Chairman), M Corser, I Hedley, M McCarthy (sub for Cllr Bell), A Mackiewicz, M Robinson, S Rose, G Slater (sub for Cllr S Slater) and J Tildesley	OSMB. Some comments made and referred to the Cabinet Member for Resources
1.0 Final	24 Oct 2009	Cllr K Hawkins	Cabinet Member for Resources Approved as Final

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Information is one of the key resources within our organisation. It is at the heart of our business processes, shapes our decision making, is vital in delivering quality customer services, and lets us know how we are performing.

The overall purpose of the Information Strategy is therefore to promote the effective management and use of information across the Council, recognising its value as a corporate resource for the delivery of corporate objectives. To achieve this, the strategy describes five priorities that the Council seeks to make improvements against. The five priorities are:

Five Priorities

1. Improve the understanding of Information Management responsibilities.
2. Improve the management of information.
3. Develop employees and elected members information management skills and competencies.
4. Exploit the information and systems we have.
5. Ensure information is adequately safeguarded.

Ensuring our information investments meet the requirements of our customers in a '*Value for Money*' way, is also important. The strategy sets out the information vision and priorities - and defines the governance that will enable the development of solutions that are aligned to priority outcomes (see figure 1).

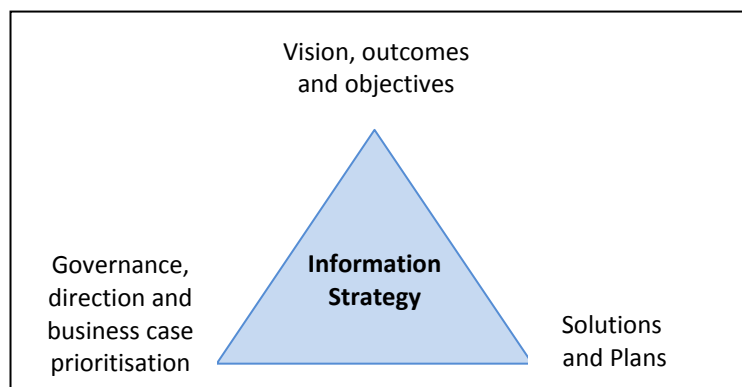


Figure 1 – Information Strategy Triangle

Introduction

Managed well, information that is of good quality will help officers make sound decisions, deliver evidence-based policy, operate legally and accountably, respond to enquiries, share learning, work collaboratively and support business continuity. However, managed poorly, there can be serious business, legal, financial and personal consequences as information may be misleading, decision making may be flawed, resources may be wasted, poor services may not be improved, and policy may be ill-founded.

Managing our information assets well is critical to delivering excellent customer outcomes. Treating the customer as an individual is heavily dependent upon being able to access high quality information at the point of contact with the citizen. Having access to information that helps to shape the services customers want and need is also critical as is being able to provide quality information to management, elected members, citizens, inspectors and funding bodies.

Therefore, just like other resources such as finance, people and property, information needs managing effectively if we are to get the most out of its value to our organisation. Only if we manage and use information effectively will we improve our decisions, our processes and our performance.

Purpose of the Strategy

Aligning workload or new projects to corporate priorities and helping officers and elected members to prepare and approve business cases that make the biggest impact requires a written down and agreed statement of what our information management priorities and strategic objectives are. The purpose of this Information Strategy is therefore to provide an *'executive steer'* for all future projects and changes relating to information management to be measured against to assess their viability and priority.

The strategy is designed to:

- Gain corporate recognition of the value of information as an important resource.
- Deliver a vision for the Council's information management and leadership over the next 3 years.
- Describe the objectives for information oriented work or projects to meet.
- Introduce new governance arrangements for overseeing information management.
- Establish the 2008/9 baseline for information delivery.
- Identify key projects that, subject to approved business cases, may help to deliver high quality customer outcomes that are dependent on better information.

Scope

It is important that information management is not seen as totally synonymous with information technology and therefore is only about hardware and software. Although the scope of the Council's information management activity does indeed cover information held electronically (*e.g. on the Internet, Intranet and on various systems such as CareFirst, Finance and CRM*), it also covers all other types of information stored in more traditional manual systems and held in hard copy format.

Audience

The primary audience for this strategy is the Council's elected members and officers who will make recommendations and decisions about how we invest our resources to deliver information oriented outcomes.

The strategy is also mindful of other readers, such as auditors, citizens and interested junior officers who are not directly involved in business case decision making. As such, assumptions are kept to a minimum, although there is a balance to be struck with keeping the size of the document small and accessible.

Ownership and authorship

The Information Strategy is to be owned by the Information Strategy Board, reporting to CMT and elected members, as shown below. At the time of writing the Information Strategy Board does not exist; it is one of the proposals of the strategy.

In the absence of a formally defined Chief Information Officer (CIO) role, CMT has requested the Head of ICT to consult and produce this draft Information Strategy for review and recommendation to elected members.

Duration

The Information Strategy takes a long term view, with a particular focus on the next three years (2009/10 to 2011/12). It will be updated at least annually on a rolling plan, under the governance of the Information Strategy Board and its reports to elected members and CMT.

Context

The key drivers for the Information Strategy are as follows:

- Customer service.
- Management intelligence.
- Operational intelligence.
- Compliance and legislation.
- Directorate needs.
- Value for Money.

Managed properly, information that is of good quality will help officers and elected members make good decisions and allocate resources wisely. The information strategy therefore supports the whole of the Council’s Strategy Map, however, in particular those outcomes highlighted below.

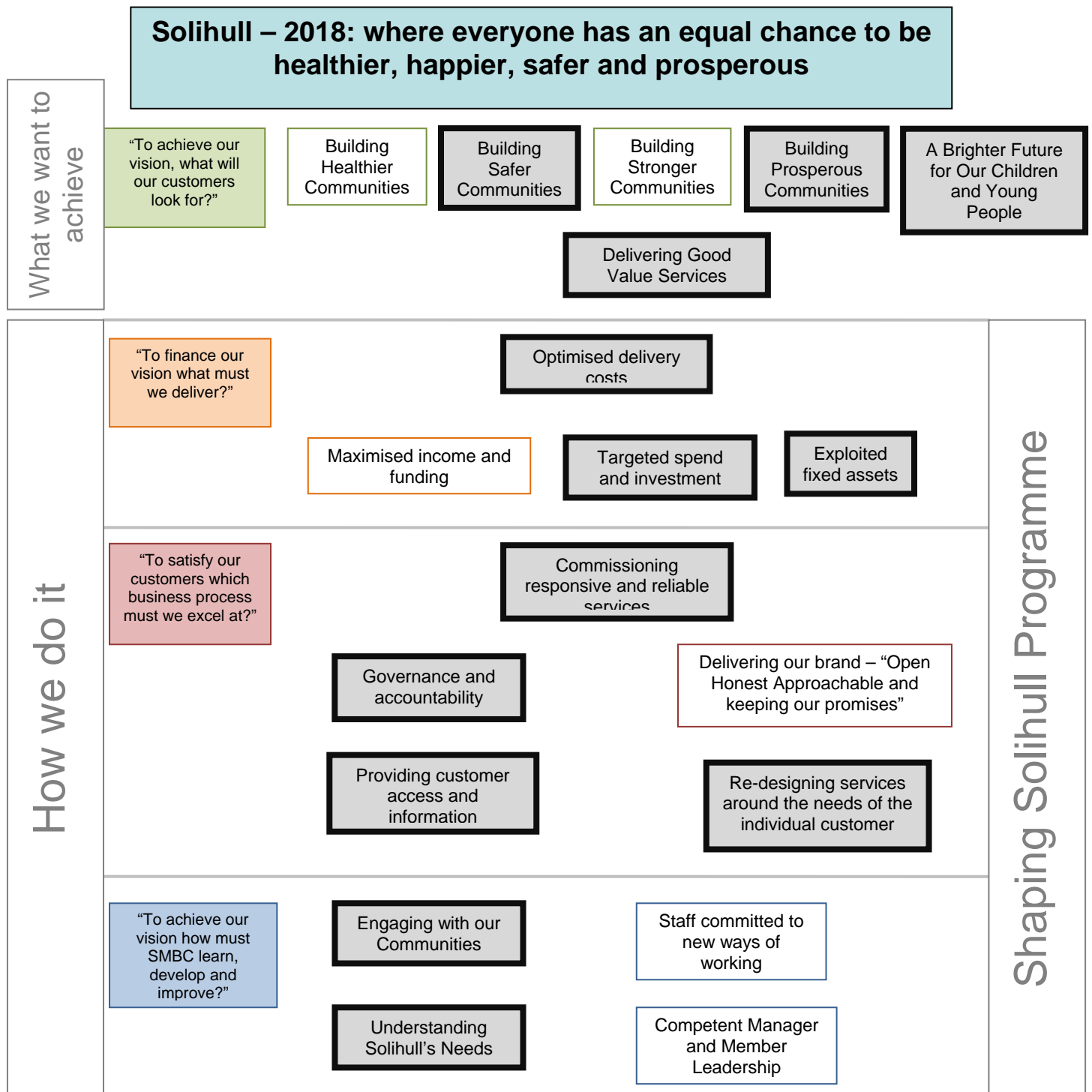


Figure 2 – The Council’s Strategy Map, showing those elements positively impacted by the Information Strategy with a bold border

Positioning the Information Strategy

The Information Strategy is just part of the Council’s overall framework of Strategies and Plans. To illustrate this the diagram below shows the relationship between the information strategy and a few other key elements of the Council’s planning network. It is vital that all our plans and strategies are complementary, and managed together to ensure we deliver the authority’s overall vision and objectives.

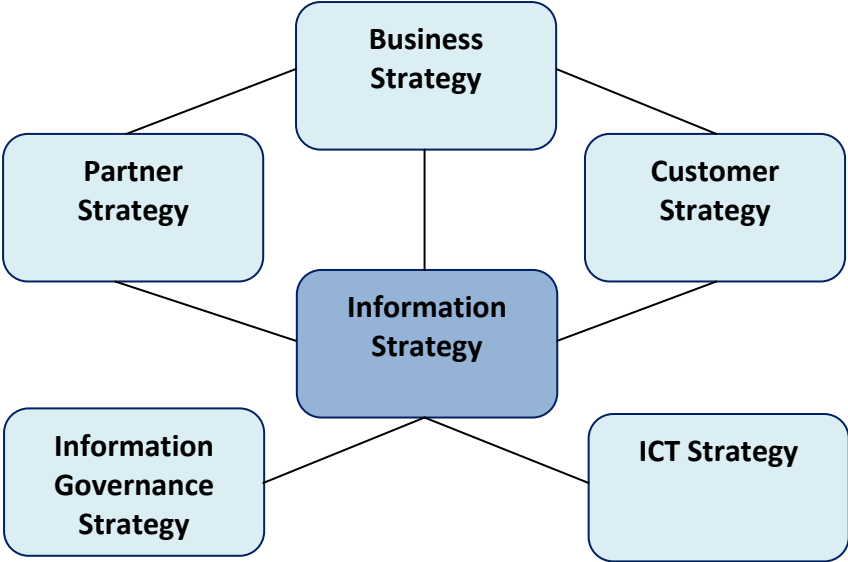


Figure 3 – Information Strategy Connections

The Vision

Our experience of e-government taught us that the notion of everything being seamlessly joined up and information provided at the fingertips of everyone, is an unaffordable luxury. An expensive integrated information systems architecture may have been appropriate for the global finance sector (*although even there, it now looks to be of dubious benefit*), but it is clearly an inappropriate investment for a small Metropolitan Council.

Nevertheless, having a notion of what “good” or even “ideal” looks like, helps to focus investment decisions. Most analysts now recognise that defining a ‘holy grail’ for information outcomes is valuable – but always remembering that the goal will never completely be achieved, recommend taking incremental steps towards it. “Think big and start small”.

For the Council, the holy grail of information management is characterised as being where as far as possible we demonstrate excellence in information capture, storage, sharing, protecting, processing, access and ultimately intelligence led decision making. As such the Holy Grail is where:

Access

- A customer can access information through any channel (phone, face to face, web, email, text, web sites and printed information), about any of our products or services and receive an immediate answer that tells them what they need to know.
- Elected members and officers spend almost no time searching for the information they need on our website, intranet, paper storage or other repositories.

Capture and sharing

- A customer need notify us once only about a death, change of address or other change of circumstances.
- Customer views obtained through the contact service and through other channels (such as elected members, wards, neighbourhoods, officers and schools) are captured, shared and exploited to the best advantage (information is Collected Once and Used Numerous Times (*COUNT*)).

Processing and storage

- All officers and elected members understand the importance of information management and have the skills, capacity and the will to ensure they manage information properly.
- The Council has mapped all of its information resources and knows exactly what information it has, where it is kept and all information is kept up to date, accurate and is disposed of when no longer needed.
- All information is managed in accordance with the Council's Information Quality standards set out in SORP 12.
- Information is stored and named in such a way that it is easily found and accessible to as many staff as possible that might have a business need to access it.

Protecting

- Adequate safeguards are in place to ensure that the information held by the Council or processed on the Council's behalf by third parties is protected against unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage.
- Customers trust that their information is secure.
- The Council complies with all the relevant legislation and standards governing use, management and access to information.

Decisions

- Community leaders can make the best possible decisions for and with their ward, based on sound information intelligence.
- The right service decisions are always made on the basis of the right management information.
- Commissioning decisions are made on the basis of the right information.
- Budget managers have accurate, complete and consistent information at their fingertips.
- The Local Development Framework is progressed on the basis of good information.

The vision is to work towards these goals through the preparation and approval of prioritised business cases, spending as little as possible for the best outcomes and implementing lean solutions wherever appropriate.

Value for Money

In the heat of a global recession and in the context of decreasing local authority budget provisions, now is no time for over ambitious commitments. Where we can deliver better customer outcomes and better Value for Money by improving our information management however, we have a responsibility to do that in a way that is efficient and delivers the maximum returns for the minimum investment. Investment in information solutions will need to be closely scrutinised to ensure that the business case will genuinely deliver valuable improvements.

Delivering Efficiencies

It is difficult to quantify the benefits of good information management in financial terms. However, it is estimated that nationally, on average each staff member spends 6 weeks per year searching for information¹. If the average salary point in Solihull is Band D, salary point 31, this could equate to a monetary equivalent of £4,830 per person. Council wide there are 2850 staff and if all were paid at the same salary point, this could be the equivalent of £13,765,500 per year spent searching for information! If all staff could save themselves just 1 hour per year this could be a quantifiable efficiency of approximately £60,000 per year using an average cost of staff time. If this could be reduced by a week per year for all staff then this would save over 105,000 hours equivalent to approximately £ 2,294,250 per year average cost of staff time.

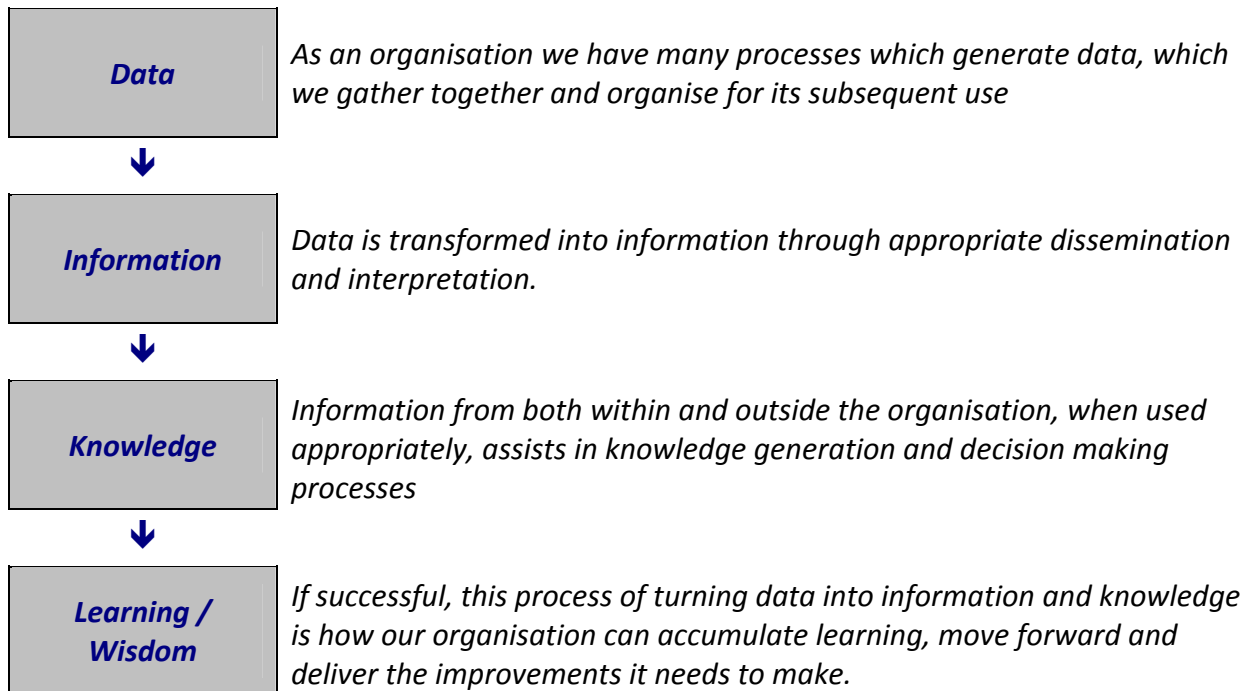
Although directly attributable and cashable savings would be difficult to secure, a contribution to the overall efficiency of the council is of this magnitude is deliverable.

¹ Records Management Bulletin Issue 147 January 2009.

Information Management

What is Information Management?

If we manage information effectively it can lead to significant improvements in our learning as an organisation and therefore our ability to improve, as illustrated below.



Information management describes the means

- By which we plan, collect, create, organise, use, control, maintain, disseminate and dispose of our information, and
- Through which we ensure that the value of that information is identified and exploited to the fullest extent, in support of our corporate learning, our internal operations, and our service delivery.

The Five Priorities

We have identified five priority areas for improvement.

1. *Improve the understanding of Information Management responsibilities.*

To help achieve this, the Information Strategy Board will review, prioritise and allocate resources that:

- a) Promote the Information Strategy across the organisation.
- b) Help staff and Councillors to understand their information responsibilities and treat information as an organisational asset.
- c) Identify a lead officer at senior management level for championing and driving forward the achievement of improvements identified in the strategy.
- d) Ensure that all corporate databases have identified managers who understand their responsibilities and adopt good information management practice to ensure the integrity and reliability of the information.
- e) Ensure that all corporate databases have identified processes for their maintenance and business continuity,
- f) Identify all current information management agreements / protocols.

2. *Improve the management of information.*

To help achieve this, the Information Strategy Board will review, prioritise and allocate resources that:

- a) Ensure that key information repositories are kept up to date and managed in a consistent manner, matching agreed information quality standards and reducing unnecessary duplication and storage of information.
- b) Support the Records Management programme of work, ensuring that it:
 - Is adequately resourced to meet the objectives outlined in the Information Strategy.
 - Continues to work with business areas building up a picture of what information they hold and helping them improve the way they manage information by, for example, helping them to identify redundant information, duplicate information and business critical information; building classification schemes and retention schedules.
 - Targets as a priority those business areas deemed to be key or critical.
- c) Continue to develop, publish and promote guidance setting out good records management practice.

- d) Adopt and use relevant information management standards and classifications.
- document the use of international, national and local information standards within the corporate information directory,
 - promote the use of standards in information exchange with partner organisations,
 - develop local standards where they do not exist nationally but are needed locally to improve information access and sharing,
 - identify opportunities to apply standards to existing datasets and information where they are not already followed,
 - include consideration of standards in all system development and procurement decisions.
- e) Promote the need to adhere to the Council's records retention guidance to ensure that information is not stored longer than needed, and nor is it destroyed prematurely.
- f) Continue to identify business cases for information systems improvements.

3. *Develop employees and elected members information management skills and competencies.*

To help achieve this, the Information Strategy Board will review, prioritise and allocate resources that:

- a) Target corporate and directorate groups to raise awareness of and identify potential improvements to information management practices.
- b) Ensure that information management competencies are mainstreamed into the employee development process. For example, introducing requirements into the corporate competency framework for managers and staff, job descriptions and the corporate induction processes.
- c) Promote an information management and information sharing culture.

4. *Exploit the information and systems we have.*

To help achieve this, the Information Strategy Board will review, prioritise and allocate resources that:

- a) Develop and exploit technologies that deliver management information to managers, councillors and partners, in an easy to understand format and informs and enables effective decision making (e.g. systems such as the Solihull Observatory).
- b) Review the ready availability of, and access to, key management information

required by elected members and officers (e.g. financial information, performance information and that needed for statutory returns).

- c) Develop appropriate reporting tools to be used across the organisation.
- d) Assist information access and retrieval (e.g. a document management system).
- e) Promote a culture where officers see the information they create as being owned by the Council and not themselves, encouraging them, where appropriate, to store it in locations and with names that make it easy to find by others.
- f) Develop an Intranet Strategy which improves the signposting of information for staff and provides a channel to support corporate working, and the delivery of corporate priorities.
- g) Use the Internet to proactively publish information of interest and use to citizens and also to collect information (e.g. webforms to allow citizens to raise service requests).
- h) Create, publish and maintain an internal directory of corporate information sources, and information managers / system owners.
- i) Review the Information Strategy regularly to ensure that it is aligned with local issues and national initiatives.
- j) Wherever possible, exploit existing systems (such as Oracle) to deliver new requirements unless there is a business case to invest in new solutions.
- k) Exploit existing information intelligently.

5. *Ensure information is adequately safeguarded.*

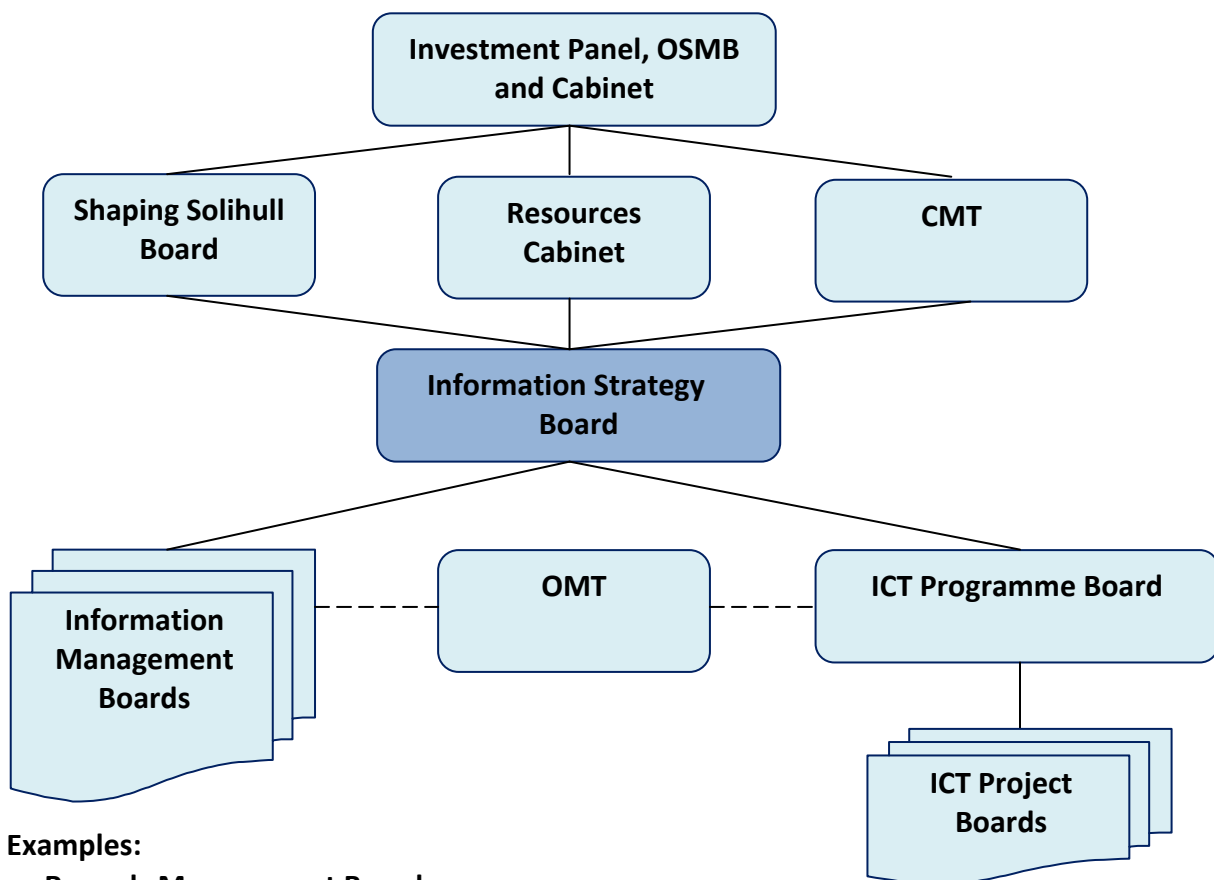
To help achieve this, the Information Strategy Board will review, prioritise and allocate resources that:

- a) Ensure that information held by the Council or third parties on the Council's behalf is protected by a level of security appropriate to:
 - the harm that might result from unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage, and
 - the nature of the information to be protected.
- b) Regularly audit key corporate databases to ensure they continue to have appropriate safeguards are in place.
- c) Develop technologies that allow information sent outside of the Council to be transmitted securely.
- d) develop and promote policy and guidance aligned to ISO 27001.
- e) Include information security and data protection within the corporate induction processes.

Governance Arrangements

Ensuring that the Information Strategy is implemented and that projects that deliver to it meet the needs and priority outcomes of the Council is achieved by the governance arrangements shown in the below diagram.

In essence it is overseen by elected members at the Investment Panel, OSMB, Cabinet and Resources Cabinet and given ongoing direction from senior officers through CMT, the Shaping Solihull Board, a specific Information Strategy Board and related officer boards.



Examples:

- Records Management Board
- Information Security Steering Group
- Information Quality Board

Note: At the time of writing, all of these boards exist, with the exception of the Information Quality Board – which is a new proposal.

Information Strategy Board

Reporting to Elected Members and Officer Executive

The Information Strategy Board oversees all Information investment and change and reports upwards to officers at the Shaping Solihull Board and CMT. Specific issues, such as the recruitment of extra staff to mitigate against a risk are reported to elected members at the Resources Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Resources is also the Council's Information Champion.

OSMB will receive a quarterly report from the Information Strategy Board which includes the ICT Programme highlights report and updates from information management projects, as appropriate.

Requests for "spend to save" and "spend to improve" funds are taken to the investment panel, for recommendation to cabinet. Increase in revenue pressures are dealt with through the budget setting process and managed through the governance set out below.

The ICT Programme Board will perform the detailed scrutiny for all ICT investments for recommendation to senior officers and elected members. The Programme Board also balances priorities between projects, monitors project progress, and helps to resolve risks and issues. Substantial changes are brought before members as recommendations.

Each ICT project has a Steering Board, reporting to the Programme Board.

The Information Quality Board will coordinate and scrutinise the application of the Council's information quality standards reporting directly to OMT and the Information Strategy Board.

Members of the Information Strategy Board

Membership of the Information Strategy Board will be:

- Director of Business Support (Chair).
- Director for Commissioning.
- Director of Governance.
- Director for People.
- Director for Places.
- Finance Representative.

The Head of ICT and the Head of Corporate Performance, Policy and Information will be non-voting members.

Frequency of Meetings

The Information Strategy board will meet quarterly.

Agenda

Standing agenda items for the Information Strategy Board will include:

1. Continuous refresh of the information strategy.
2. Monitoring the progress of initiatives.
3. Review of new business cases.
4. Commissioning new information initiatives.
5. Allocation of resources to the tasks described in the key priorities section of this strategy.
6. ICT Programme Highlights report
7. ICT Performance Management report

Resources

The Council must have adequate resources in order to deliver the Information Strategy. These resources will need to be prioritised over the fullness of time by the Information Strategy Board. Of course good information management is primarily dependent upon staff having the knowledge to understand the need for good information practices and the skills and resources and most importantly, the will to implement change. However, where appropriate, ICT can be used to help deliver Information Management if it is used as a tool in the right place and at the right time.

Indeed, ICT is already well established as a business tool to help manage and exploit the Council's information resources. Significant progress has been made to date which provides a sound foundation on which to build. (*e.g. Establishment of a customer contact service and contact centre, delivery of the e-government targets and ICT performance and VFM KPIs are benchmarked in top quartile nationally*).

Information and Communication Technology Resources

At the time of writing this strategy the following budgetary commitments exist.

Operational - Keep things going

Provision has been made to fund existing ICT commitments, including staffing and a ten year refresh plan to pay for software licences, hardware replacements and related costs. This amounts to some £5.46m pa.

Transformational - Keep things moving on

There are funds available within a capital programme for 2009/10 to invest on ICT. This amounts to around £1.1m.

There are also "spend to save" funds, for which specific business cases can be created for the recommendation of the elected members' Investment Panel and Cabinet.

There is no transformational funding set aside for ICT beyond 2009/10 and no process in place to fund increasing recurrent costs. Recurrent costs increase with project implementations (the Revenue Implication of Capital Spend - RICS), hardware replacement costs grow, license fees increase, support staffing demands increase, etc. Future investment in ICT will need to be considered as part of the 2010/11 budget setting process. Allocation of funds to specific projects and to the resultant revenue pressures will then be through the governance process set out below.

ICT Cost Benchmarking

The ICT service will be continually benchmarked against similar organisations in order to determine if investment is out of kilter with peer organisations.

Projects

At the time of writing, the ICT related projects, either underway or in the pipeline, are as follows. Those projects that are developing and proposed will need to be closely scrutinised and measured against the Information Strategy.

A project prioritisation process will be maintained by officers for recommendation to members.

ACTIVE /DEVELOPING BUSINESS CASES

- Chelmsley Wood set-up.
- Connexions Phase 2.
- Corporate & CRM Data Cleansing.
- Electronic Content Management.
- Facilities & Asset Management (TAMP).
- GCSX compliance.
- Government Gateway.
- HRE Exploitation (self service schools).
- ICIS (Integrated Children's Information Services)
- ICS (Integrated Children's Services)
- Integration Project (Enterprise).
- Land Charges (iDocs upgrade).
- Library Self Service.
- Lichfield Finance Shared System.
- Linux Upgrade to RHEL 3 to RHEL 5.
- Oracle Upgrade to Release 12.
- Payroll Improvement-payroll absence schemes.
- Performance Management System.
- Procure to Pay (iproc for schools).
- Public Protection / CRM Integration .
- PVP Warning Markers.
- Solihull Observatory.
- Web Content Management (internet).
- Web Enhancements (developer).

PROPOSED

- BI & reporting 2.
- Blended Media.
- Cash Receipting .
- Digital Inclusion.
- Disaster Recovery.
- GIS Information Management.
- Green - Power down overnight.
- Green - Thin Client.
- Green – Virtualisation.
- Intranet replacement.
- LSP – Observatory.
- Mobile Working.
- Oracle CRM Web Integration.
- Oracle Reporting Roll out.
- Payment Card Replacement.
- Payment Card Replacement.
- PCI DSS compliance.
- Portal.
- Single Sign On.
- Supply Teachers Database.

Non ICT Resources

The success of this strategy will depend upon staff and elected members having the knowledge to understand the need for and apply good information management practices. It is also heavily dependant upon them having the time and resources. It is therefore vital that senior management fully support this strategy, for without their support improvements cannot be made.

Information Governance is a term used to describe the management of information within a regulatory and standards framework. Recognising the importance of this the Council has already invested in the creation of an Information Governance Team who lead on policy, guidance and training on the legislation and standards surrounding information management such as the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act and Records Management standards. The existing work programme of the team will support several of the priorities outlined in this strategy.