

## BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Report of:** Alison Webb – Executive Member for Customer & Corporate Services

**To:** Cabinet – 3 July 2023

**Author:** Ben Meen, IT & Digital Manager

**Subject:** IT Information Security Policy

**Purpose:** To obtain approval to implement the updated IT Information Security Policy and receive delegated authority to update this document in line with changing threats and processes

### **Recommendation(s)**

Approve the implementation of the IT Information Security Policy and provide delegated authority for future updates to the relevant Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Breckland Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to leveraging technology in improving services and optimising operational efficiencies. Our ability to digitally transform our services relies heavily on the robustness, resilience, and security of our IT systems. A key component of this is ensuring we have a fit for purpose policy to enable our people (Members and Officers) to not only perform their roles to the best of their ability on behalf of residents but also to help support the protection of our IT systems. This report proposes an update to the existing IT User Policy with the creation of an IT Information Security Policy (see Appendix 1) that is not only fit for purpose now, but into the future.
- 1.2 The need to protect our data and systems from breaches and cyber threats cannot be overstated. It is fundamental to preserving the trust that our residents place in us and ensuring the reliability of our digital systems. Aligning our IT Information Security Policy to ISO-27001, an internationally acclaimed standard for information security management, is a key objective of this update. This alignment will ensure we remain at the forefront of best practice in IT security and help us to manage and minimise potential security risks effectively.
- 1.3 Moreover, the proposed policy update is designed to explicitly incorporate good IT practices into our policy framework. These are not just high-level principles but also day-to-day practices that would improve our digital hygiene, security posture, and resilience against potential cyber threats.
- 1.4 Importantly, as we continue to expand our digital capabilities, our procurement strategy will be geared towards including IT and Digital considerations in all future acquisitions of digital systems. This policy update will ensure IT and Digital involvement in all future digital change projects and will align our procurement with our strategic goals, ensuring not only that we secure the best digital systems but also that they are compliant with our rigorous security standards.
- 1.5 This proposed policy is a positive step forward for Breckland Council. It reflects our forward-thinking approach and commitment to the principles of good governance, security, and service excellence. It also signals to our staff, stakeholders, and most importantly, our residents, that their data and the digital services we provide are of the highest importance to us.

- 1.6 In conclusion, this policy update is not merely a procedural requirement but a strategic enhancement, demonstrating our pledge to embrace the future while prioritising the security of our digital infrastructure.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Agree and authorise Option 1 – Approve the implementation of the IT Information Security Policy contained within Appendix 1 and provide delegated authority for future updates to the Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder..

## **3.0 OPTIONS**

- 3.1 **Option 1** - Approve the implementation of the IT Information Security Policy contained within Appendix 1 and provide delegated authority for future updates to the relevant Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.2 **Option 2** – Approve the implementation of the IT Information Security Policy contained within Appendix 1 but do not provide delegated authority to the relevant Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for future updates.
- 3.3 **Option 3** – Do not approve the implementation of the IT Information Security Policy contained within Appendix 1.

## **4.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The reasons to approve the recommendation are:

- The current policy requires refreshing to align with changes in systems, processes, technologies and threats.
- There is a need to enshrine in policy a number of behaviours and processes that are not currently in existing policies (i.e. involvement of IT & Digital in procurement of new systems, behaviours around cyber security etc.)
- With threats and technologies constantly evolving, there is a need for delegated authority to allow for frequent interim updates to ensure that the policy remains fit for purpose.

## **5.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS**

The following expected benefits are:

- Increased security through incorporating industry best practice approaches.
- Clear and easy-to understand guidance for staff and members to ensure safe and secure use of the Council's IT systems.
- Better control of digital systems across the Council and more ability to align these with the wider IT & Digital strategy, reducing the risk of system incompatibility or implementation issues.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Constitution & Legal**

- 5.1.1 There are no constitutional or legal issues.

### **5.2 Contracts**

- 5.2.1 There are no supplier contract issues.

### **5.3 Corporate Priorities**

5.3.1 This policy will help enable the council to deliver IT services safely and securely in line with the Working Smarter corporate priority.

### **5.4 Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.4.1 There are no equality, diversity or human rights issues.

### **5.5 Financial**

5.5.1 There are no financial issues.

### **5.6 Staffing**

5.6.1 There are no staffing issues.

### **5.7 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.7.1 Following the decision by the Committee, this policy would immediately come into effect replacing the legacy IT User Policy.

## **6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All wards

## **7.0 ACRONYMS**

7.1 n/a

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**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to a Discretionary Service**

### **Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix 1 – IT Information Security Policy

## **Appendix 1**

### **IT Information Security Policy**