



ANNUAL REPORT – INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

JANUARY 1 2006 – December 31 2006

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Introduction: This report is to provide a position statement for Information Management, specifically Data Protection, Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations, Records Management and RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act) . The service vision is that information is:

- Valued as a corporate asset and resource
- Safeguarded appropriately by strong corporate commitment and steer together with active best practice by all staff
- fit for purpose
- of a sufficiently high quality to enable multi purpose use/innovative ways
- managed in a framework of standards
- location independent
- organised, stored, retained in a consistent way

Highlights of the Year:

Governance:

November 2006, Adoption of a draft Information Management Strategy

Information Management Board and working groups cited as good practice by Audit Commission produced 'FOI good practice tool'

Citizen's views and awareness of Information Rights was canvassed in winter 2006 survey

Managing information course offered 4 times a year as part of Institute of Leadership Management suite of courses

Access to Information intranet pages expanded to encompass records management guidance and still prove consistently to be a popular hit with staff

Continue to positively network with other AGMA (Association of Greater Manchester authorities)

Data Protection:

A new data sharing group has been instigated to take forward the data sharing agenda and the formalisation of data sharing arrangements

A data sharing toolkit has been developed to aid officers with data sharing issues and this has been placed on the Council's intranet.

Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations:

High Standards of performance are being maintained in the face of an increase of 23% in the volume of requests from 2005-2006.

Records Management:

November 2006, adoption of a Records Management Policy

Guidance and e learning module launched for staff

Use of National Archives self assessment tool to measure performance and progress against national records management best practice.

RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act)

April 2007 Inspection by the Officer of the Surveillance Commissioner

July 2007 Inspection by the Interception of Communications Commissioner

The Future:

Projects: Pilots were agreed with the Programme Management Board ie,

- Development of Data Sharing arrangements
- Review of Fair Processing arrangements

These are both initially focused on Adults & Community and Children, Young People and Families and complementary to each other

- Information Audit
- Retention and Disposal Schedules

These pilots are complementary in that they aim to identify records held by the Council and 'pilot' different methodologies in this process

It is also intended that Information Management will be a key element of the Council's Property workstream, eg, development of new ways of working, accommodation rationalisation etc. and a close working relationship forged with the Business Improvement Service

RIPA: Responsibility for this will be transferred to Environmental Legal Group to maintain standards of performance and further develop practices

Governance: To continue to build on the raising the profile of Information Management by further developing the Information Management Strategy, training and awareness, and performance assessment/indicator tools

Attached:

Appendix A – Customer Perception

Appendix B – FOI/EIR statistics

Appendix C - Training and Awareness

Appendix D – Records Management Progress

Citizens Survey

Questions asked in the winter 2006 Citizens Survey were aimed at ascertaining the level of awareness of the public in relation to information rights. It is the first time these questions have been asked.

Key responses

61% aware of DPA rights of access to own information, and 37% of those know how to access it. This awareness was further supported by 71% knowing they had right to see own information, (when asked to score against specific types of record, eg health, credit etc). There is greater awareness in the age 25-44 age group, however there is significantly less awareness generally by BME.

35% aware of FOI/EIR rights to Public Authority recorded information, and 28% of those know how to access it. Again there is significantly less awareness generally by BME.

Only 13% were aware that there was information on the Councils website on their information rights.

Internal Customer Survey

As part of Legal's client survey, departments were asked to give feedback in relation to the information management service.

Ratings: Excellent 25%, Good/Satisfactory 75%, Poor 0%

Introduction

There are no statutory performance indicators but the report aims to provide statistics and commentary on the application of Freedom of Information 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 during the 2ND year of implementation, January 2006 – December 2006.

Scope

The scope of the report looks at the requests that are formally logged on the FOI system, eg, those that specify that they are a FOI/EIR request, those that cut across more than one department, those that cannot be routinely and easily answered, those that might involve part or whole refusals or exemptions. In theory any written/verbal request for information might fall into the remit of FOI or EIR, for practical and operational reasons the above criteria has been adopted.

Value of Statistics

The information is used to track not just the volume of request but also aids performance comparisons, eg, across OMBC departments, across Councils, with central Government. It can be used to assist in identifying any gaps in training and awareness and to celebrate the successes.

The statistics have been promoted by AGMA FOI Co-ordinator, Kath Matley, as a valuable model and can be used to demonstrate the amount of information requests this Council deals with, the amount of information that is given out, the information withheld and also which service areas within the Council are popular for requests.

STATISTICS 2006

Volume of Requests

2006 SAW AN INCREASE OF 23% IN THE VOLUME OF REQUESTS

2005 = 195 requests, 2006 = 240 requests, 2007 ½ year (end Jun) =136

The latest Reports from the UCL report an average of 180 requests per council in 2006, and increase of 20% since 2005¹.

We do not currently time record on the processing of FOI requests but avg figures reported by the UCL report that the avg time spent on a request is 13hrs so based on the std rate of £25 per hour on which FOI costs for local authorities are based the costs to the Council have been:

2005 = 195 requests x 13 hrs each @ £25 = £63,375

2006 = 240 requests x 13 hrs each @ £25 = £78,000

2007 forecast based on ½ year figures = 272 requests x 13 hrs each @£25 = £88,400

This of course excludes and time for in depth internal reviews or liaison with the ICO appeals process

As 65% other Councils, FOI provision is free of charge.

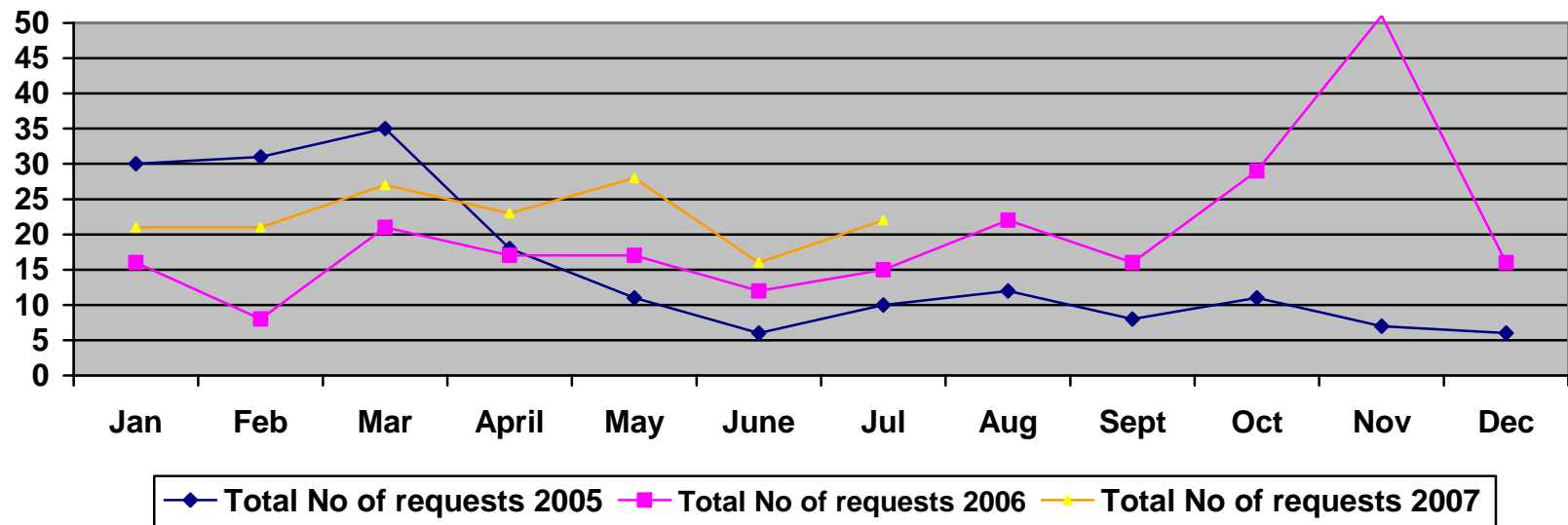
Approx 90% of requests (both years) were FOI, the remainder being a mix of Data Protection, Environmental Information or hybrid.

Note: that at least 27% (23% 2005) of requests were made by individuals who made multiple requests, ie, asking legitimate questions of either one or more directorates, at least 9% (7%2005) of requests were made from the media

This is a difficult area to monitor as the legislation is applicant blind, in that a request does not need to state a reason, quote the legislation, or state a full name for response, as long as there is a contact name and address sufficient to allow a response, the request is legitimate.

The Information Commissioner is currently reviewing the guidance and use of Publications Schemes and whilst the Council's has not been updated pending this, the UCL report reflected the common practitioner view of it being poorly used and of purpose in that 66% of authorities had not done so either.

¹ UCL FOI2000 AND LOCAL GOVT 2006, <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/foidp/downloads/2006%20local%20govt%20survey%20FINAL.pdf>



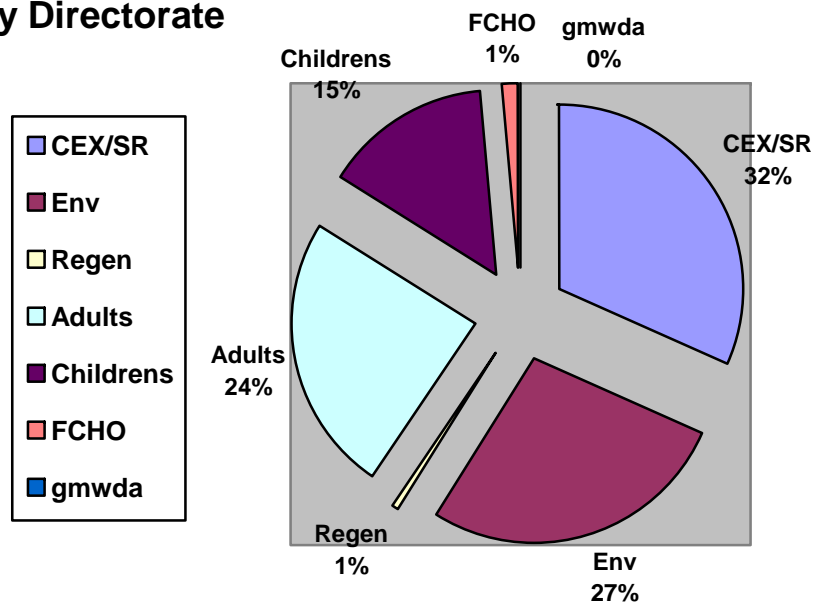
DEPARTMENTAL SHARE

| | No of requests 2005 | No of requests 2006 | % of request volume | % share 2005 | % share 2006 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Chief Executives/Strategy & Resources | 71 | 103 | 45% increase | 36 | 44 |
| Environmental Services | 48 | 65 | 35% increase | 15 | 27 |
| Adults and Community | 21 | 34 | 62% increase* | 11 | 14 |
| Children, Young People and Families | 29 | 28 | 3% decrease* | 25 | 12 |
| First Choice Homes | 12 | 8 | 33% decrease | 6 | 3 |
| Regeneration | 14 | 1 | 92% decrease | 7 | 0 |
| Waste Disposal Authority | 0 | 1 | | | |
| Totals | 195 | 240 | | | |

*A&C undertake FOI requests on behalf of CYPF where appropriate

2007 % Share to date:

% of requests by Directorate



Performance 2006 (% of requests completed to time)

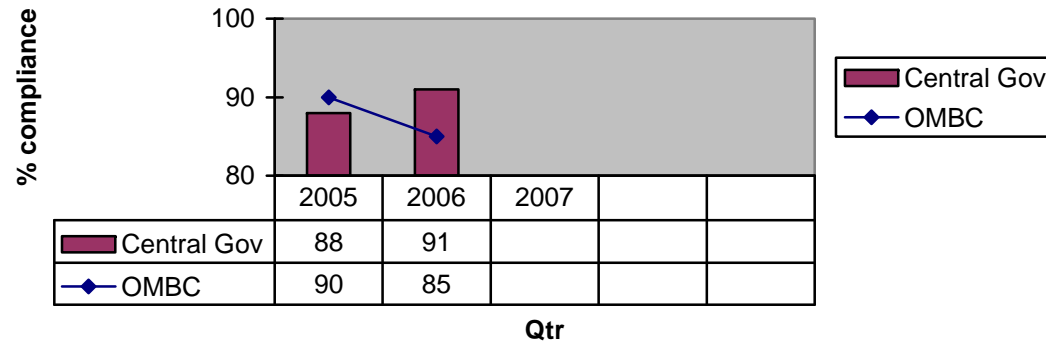
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | AVG 2006 |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| CEX/SR | 84 | 100 | 96 | 84 | 91 |
| CYPF | 100 | 83 | 67 | 75 | 81 |
| ENV | 47 | 92 | 64 | 81 | 71 |
| FCHO | 100 | 100 | 100 | n/a | 100 |
| REGEN | 100 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 100 |
| A&C | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | | | | | |

Comparison with 2005

| | Avg 2005 % Performance | Avg 2006 % performance |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------|
| CEX/SR | 89 | 91 |
| CYPF | 82 | 81 |
| ENV | 82 | 71 |
| A&C | 100 | 100 |
| | | |

Comparisons:

annual average performance OMBC v Govt



In terms of a comparative snapshot for 2006 performance, ie, completing requests to time, there are various figures gathered via a variety of practitioner forums that indicate that average performance is circa 87% which is not dissimilar to Oldham and central Govt averages, and quoted in the UCL report.

| Public Body | VOLUME | % COMPLETED TO TIME | Public Body | VOLUME | % COMPLETED TO TIME |
|-----------------|--------|---------------------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|
| Perth & Kinross | 842 | 97 | North Somerset | ? | 71 |
| Camden | 651 | 85 | County Council | 272 | 95 |
| Cardiff | ? | 65-82% | Regulatory Body | 464 | 85 |
| Norfolk | ? | 95 | London Unitary | 653 | 85 |
| University | 34 | 97 | London Unitary | 230 | 100 |

No of complete refusals 16

UCL reported an average council refusal rate as 9.8%, our rate for 2006 was 6%

3 x A&C
 3 x CYPF
 5 x Env
 1 x FCHO
 4 x SR

No of Appeals

Internal 5

UCL reported an average council rate as 2.5%, our rate for 2006 was 2%

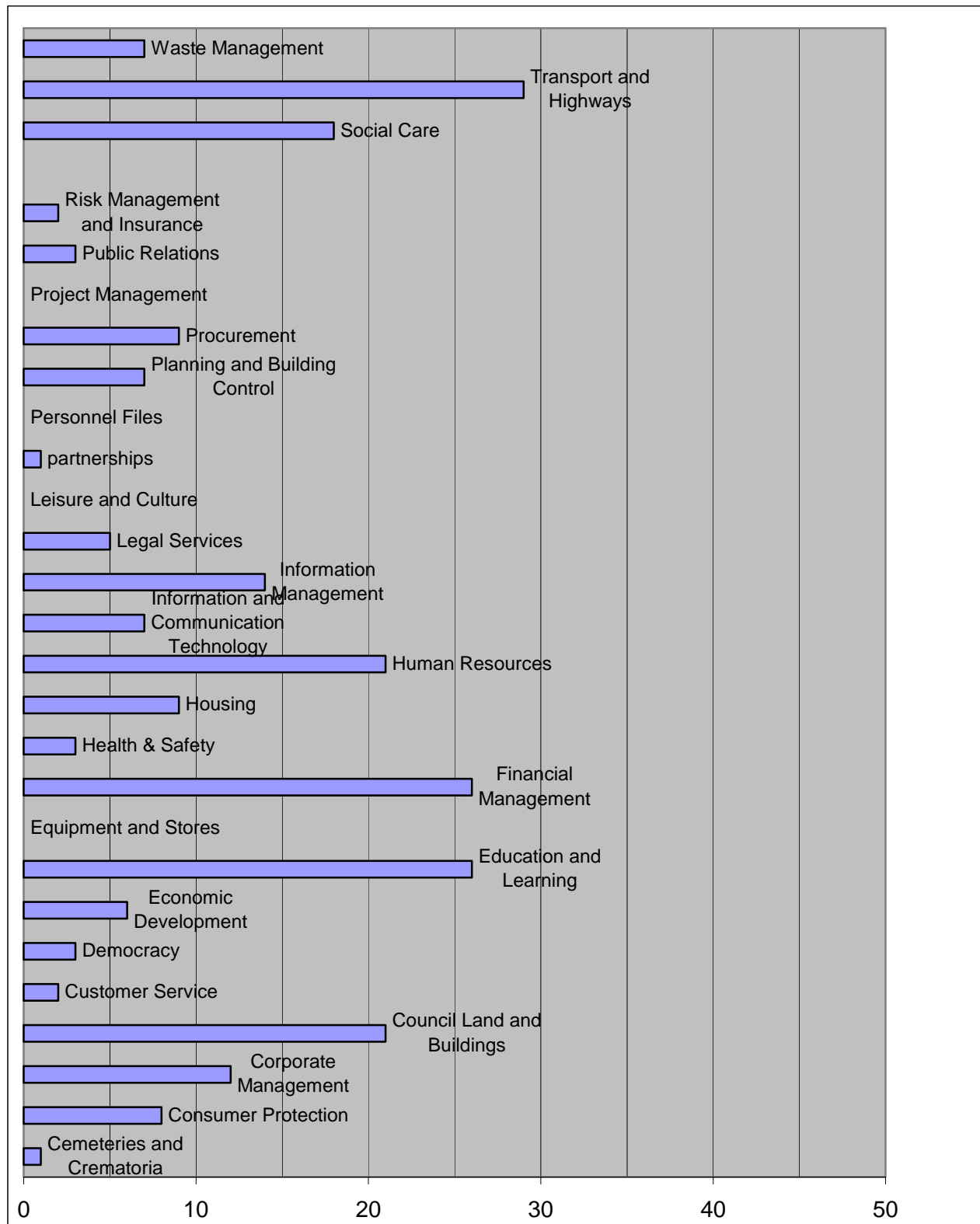
1 x CYPF
 4 x SR
 1 x SR

ICO 1

1 x Env,

Request by Theme

The logging system does allow for some basic categorization of requests by theme



Top themes

No of requests

% of whole

| | | |
|--|----|----|
| Transport/Highways (6% 2005) | 29 | 12 |
| Education/learning (3 rd Place/ 9% 2005) | 26 | 11 |
| Financial Management (1 st place/ 13% 2005) | 26 | 11 |
| Human Resources (5 th place/ 7% 2005) | 21 | 9 |
| Council Land/buildings (3% 2005) | 21 | 9 |

UCL reported top 3 to be costs, expenses and local issues

This information provides a snapshot for 2006 of the effectiveness of some of the awareness raising methods used.

Organisational Development: Managing Information has been offered for the first time this year as part of the Corporate Organisational Development Calendar. It scheduled to run 4 times over the year, initially for ½ day, but feedback from the initial session resulted in it being extended to a full day to accommodate the level of interaction/debate generated, example feedback,

“Fascinating! Very interesting and learnt lots” & “ I am recommending this course to my colleagues”

Publications: Audit Commission FOI Good Practice Tool. – cites Oldham Council’s structure as good leadership practice, ie, working groups reporting to an Information Management Board. Practical Privacy – June 2006, the Information Manager data protection role was profiled

Intranet: The access to information pages on the intranet remain a source of reference for current and new personnel. The ‘hits’ monitoring figures showing the frequency of the pages appearing in the top 50 pages indicates a high level of awareness. These figures should not be seen in isolation but linked positively with the success rate of OMBC in embracing the spirit, as well as the rules governing access to information.

The e learning tools provide an overview of FOI, EIR and DPA, and regardless of whether the test is completed or not, they provide a valuable reference tool.

Sample Figures

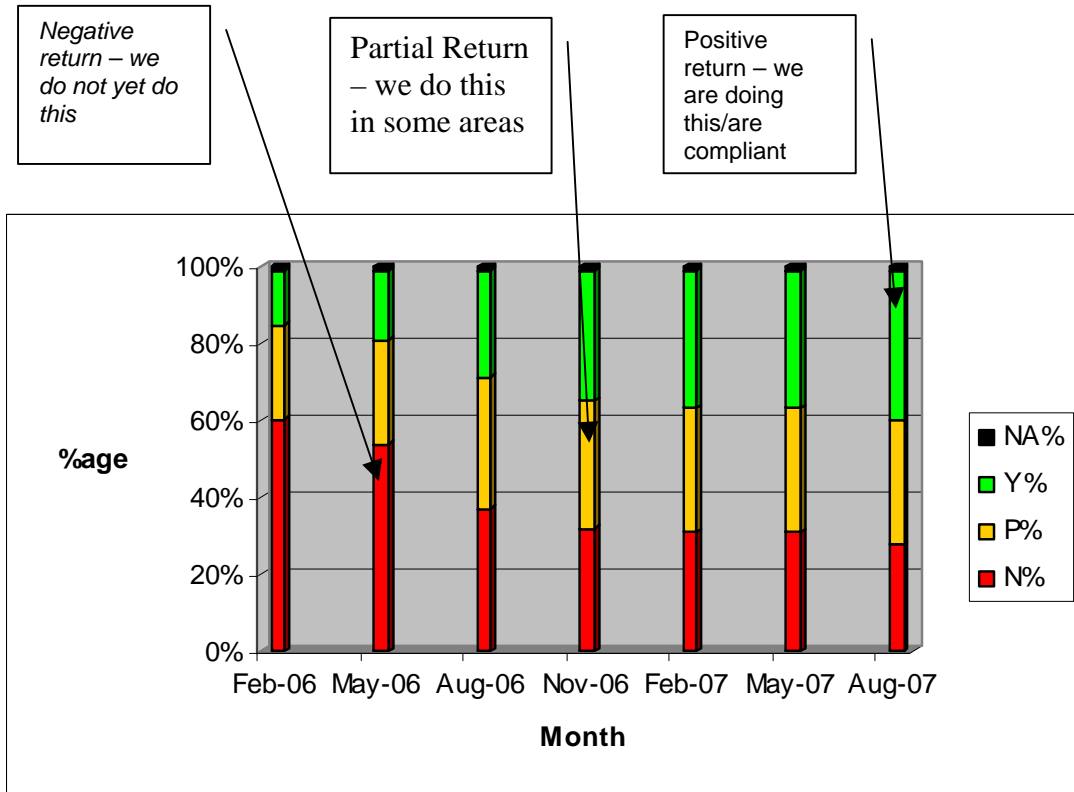
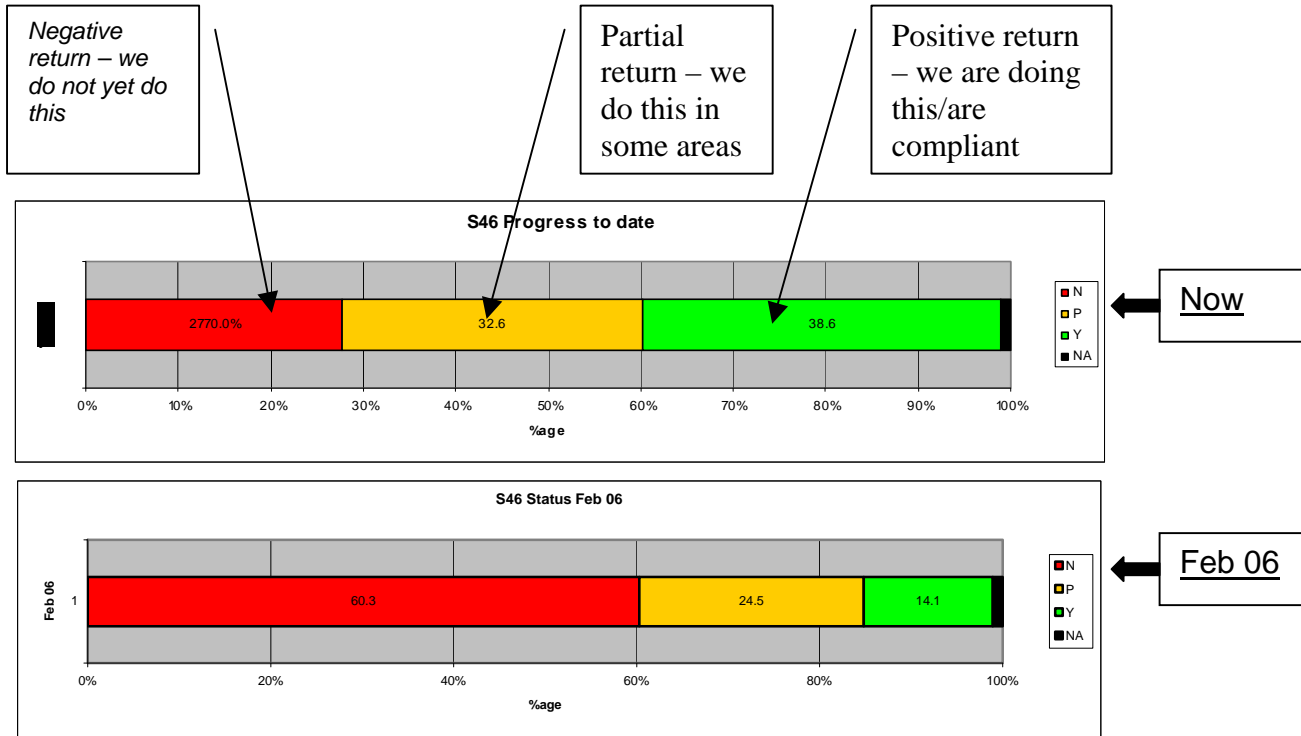
INTRANET FIGURES

Access to Information Pages :

| | 2006 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| RANKING (out of 50 most visited pages) | 035 | 033 | 36 | 30 | 37 | 31 | 39 | 32 | 34 | 30 | 27 | 34 |
| VISITS | 457 | 316 | 301 | 342 | 250 | 411 | 303 | 346 | 320 | 354 | 387 | 229 |

Section 46 Records Management Code of Practice implementation Progress to Date – Aug 07

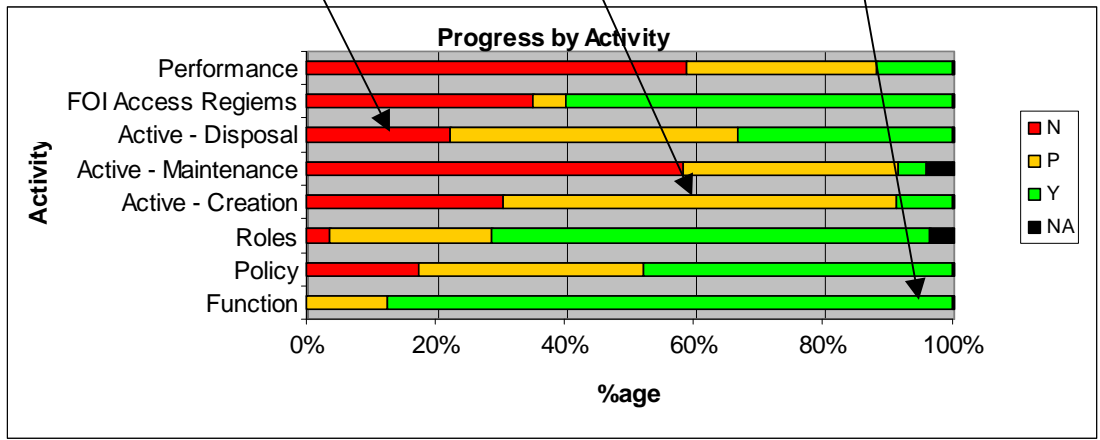
Current position



Negative return – we do not yet do this

Partial return – we

Positive return – we



Comment on Progress

Progress between February and August 2006 was very rapid primarily as a result of the appointment of a Records Manager and establishment of records management policy and an initial suite of guidance. Future progress is expected to be slower as it is largely dependent on making practical changes to the way that records are managed across the organisation.